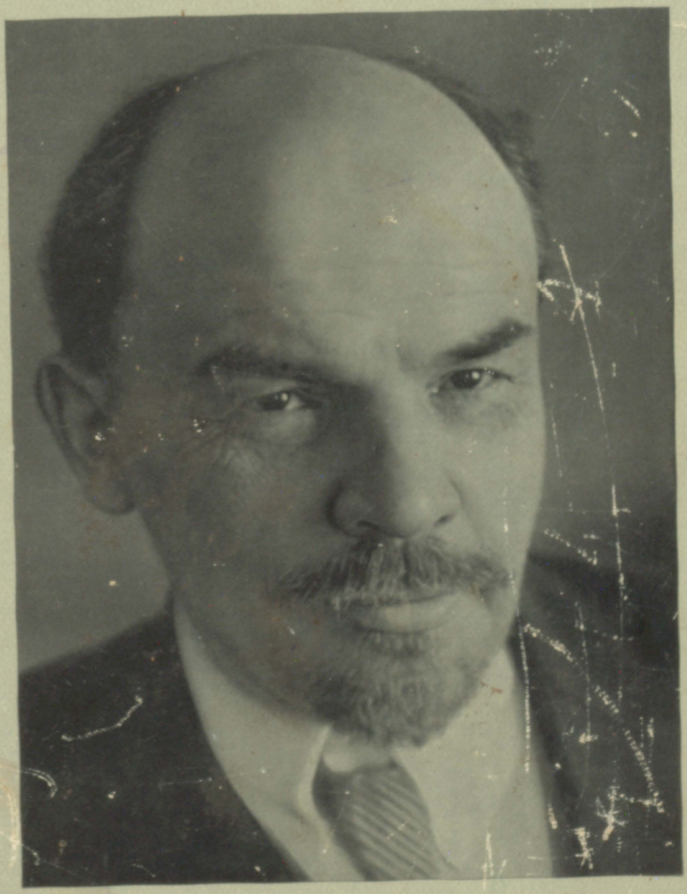
Lenin

ON CULTURE AND CULTURAL REVOLUTION



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Workers of All Countries, Unite!

V. I. Lenin

On Culture and Cultural Revolution

Progress Publishers • Moscow 1966

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

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В И ЛЕНИН

О КУЛЬТУРЕ И КУЛЬТУРНОЙ РЕВОЛЮЦИИ

На английском языке

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From THE HERITAGE WE RENOUNCE

The enlightener believes in the present course of social development, because he fails to observe its inherent contradictions. The Narodnik[1] fears the present course of social development, because he is already aware of these contradictions. The "disciple"[2] believes in the present course of social development, because he sees the only earnest of a better future in the full development of these contradictions. The first and last trends therefore strive to support, accelerate, facilitate development along the present path, to remove all obstacles which hamper this development and retard it. Narodism, on the contrary, strives to retard and halt this development, is afraid of abolishing certain obstacles to the development of capitalism. The first and last trends are distinguished by what may be called historical optimism: the farther and the quicker things go as they are, the better it will be. Narodism, on the contrary, naturally tends to historical pessimism: the farther things go as they are, the worse it will be. The "enlighteners" never posed questions concerning the character of post-Reform development and confined themselves exclusively to warring against the survivals of the pre-Reform system, to the negative task of clearing the way for a European type of development in Russia. Narodism posed the question of capitalism in

Russia, but answered it in the sense that capitalism is reactionary, and therefore could not wholly accept the heritage of the enlighteners: the Narodniks always warred against people who in general strove to Europeanise Russia from the standpoint of a "single civilisation"; warred against them not only because they, the Narodniks, could not confine themselves to these people's ideals (such a war would have been just), but because they did not want to go so far in the development of this, i.e., capitalist, civilisation. The "disciples" answer the question of capitalism in Russia in the sense that it is progressive, and they therefore not only can, but must, accept the heritage of the enlighteners in its entirety, supplementing it with an analysis of the contradictions of capitalism from the standpoint of the propertyless producers. The enlighteners did not single out any one class of the population for special attention; they not only spoke of the people in general, but even of the nation in general. The Narodniks were desirous of representing the interests of labour, but they did not point to any definite groups in the contemporary economic system; actually, they always took the standpoint of the small producer, whom capitalism converts into a commodity producer. The "disciples" not only take the interests of labour as their criterion, but in doing so point to quite definite economic groups in the capitalist economy, namely, the propertyless producers. By the nature of their aims, the first and last trends correspond to the interests of the classes which are created and developed by capitalism; Narodism, by its

nature, corresponds to the interests of the class of small producers, the petty bourgeoisie, which occupies an intermediate position among the classes of contemporary society. Consequently, Narodism's contradictory attitude to the "heritage" is not accidental, but is a necessary result of the very nature of the Narodnik views: we have seen that one of the basic features of the enlighteners' views was the ardent desire to Europeanise Russia, but the Narodniks cannot possibly share this desire fully without ceasing to be Narodniks.

We have in the end arrived at the conclusion which we have repeatedly indicated above in particular instances, namely, that *the disciples are much more consistent and faithful guardians of the heritage than the Narodniks.* Far from renouncing the heritage, they consider it one of their principal duties to refute the romantic and petty-bourgeois fears which induce the Narodniks on very many and very important points to reject the European ideals of the enlighteners. But it goes without saying that the "disciples" do not guard the heritage in the way an archivist guards an old document. Guarding the heritage does not mean confining oneself to the heritage, and the "disciples" add to their defence of the general ideals of Europeanism an analysis of the contradictions implicit in our capitalist development, and an assessment of this development from the specific standpoint indicated above.

Written in exile at the end of 1897
First published in 1898 in the miscellany Vladimir Ilyin, *Economic Studies and Essays*, St Petersburg

Collected Works, Vol 2, pp 525-27

CONCERNING *VEKHI*[3]

The well-known symposium *Vekhi*, compiled from contributions by the most influential Constitutional-Democratic[4] publicists, which has run through several editions in a short time and has been rapturously received by the whole reactionary press, is a real sign of the times. However much the Cadet newspapers do to "rectify" particular passages in *Vekhi* that are excessively nauseating, however much it is repudiated by some Cadets who are quite powerless to influence the policy of the Constitutional-Democratic Party as a whole or are aiming to deceive the masses as to the true significance of this policy, it is an unquestionable fact that "*Vekhi*" *has expressed the unmistakable essence of modern Cadetism.* The party of the Cadets is the party of *Vekhi*.

Prizing above everything the development of the political and class-consciousness of the masses, working-class democrats should welcome *Vekhi* as a magnificent exposure of the essence of the political trend of the Cadets by their ideological leaders. The gentlemen who have written *Vekhi* are: Berdayev, Bulgakov, Herschensohn, Kistyakovsky, Struve, Frank and Izgoyev. The very names of these well-known deputies, well-known renegades and well-known Cadets, are eloquent enough. The authors of

Vekhi speak as real ideological leaders of a whole social trend. They give us in concise outline a complete encyclopaedia on questions of philosophy, religion, politics, publicist literature, and appraisals of the whole liberation movement and the whole history of Russian democracy. By giving *Vekhi* the subtitle "A Collection of Articles on the Russian Intelligentsia" the authors understate the actual subject-matter of their publication, for, with them, the "intelligentsia" in fact appears as the spiritual leader, inspirer and mouthpiece of the whole Russian democracy and the whole Russian liberation movement. *Vekhi* is a most significant landmark on the road of Russian Cadetism and Russian liberalism in general towards a *complete break* with the Russian liberation movement, with all its main aims and fundamental traditions.

I

This *encyclopaedia of liberal renegacy* embraces three main subjects: 1) the struggle against the ideological principles of the whole world outlook of Russian (and international) democracy; 2) repudiation and vilification of the liberation movement of recent years; 3) an open proclamation of its "flunkey" sentiments (and a corresponding "flunkey" policy) in relation to the Octobrist bourgeoisie, the old regime and the entire old Russia in general.

The authors of *Vekhi* start from the philosophical bases of the "intellectualist" world outlook. The book is permeated through and

through with bitter opposition to materialism, which is qualified as nothing but dogmatism, metaphysics, "the most elementary and lowest form of philosophising" (p. 4—references are to the first edition of *Vekhi*). Positivism is condemned because "for us" (i e., the Russian "intelligentsia" that *Vekhi* annihilates) it was "identified with materialist metaphysics" or was interpreted "exclusively in the spirit of materialism" (15), while "no mystic, no believer, can deny scientific positivism and science" (11). Don't laugh! "Hostility to idealist and religious mystical tendencies" (6)—such is the charge with which *Vekhi* attacks the "intelligentsia". "Yurkevich, at any rate, was a real philosopher in comparison with Chernyshevsky" (4).

Holding this point of view, *Vekhi* very naturally thunders incessantly against the atheism of the "intelligentsia" and strives with might and main to re-establish the religious world outlook in its entirety. Having demolished Chernyshevsky as a philosopher it is quite natural that *Vekhi* demolishes Belinsky as a publicist. Belinsky, Dobrolyubov and Chernyshevsky were the leaders of the "intellectuals" (134, 56, 32, 17 and elsewhere). Chaadayev, Vladimir Solovyov, Dostoyevsky were "not intellectuals at all". The former were the leaders of a trend against which *Vekhi* is fighting to the death. The latter "tirelessly maintained" the very same things that *Vekhi* stands for today, but "they were unheeded, the intelligentsia passed them by", declares the preface to *Vekhi*.

The reader can already see from this that it is not the "intelligentsia" that *Vekhi* is attack-

ing. This is only an artificial and misleading manner of expression. The attack is being pursued all along the line against democracy, against the democratic world outlook. And since it is inconvenient for the ideological leaders of a party that advertises itself as "constitutional" and "democratic" to call things by their true names, they have borrowed their terminology from *Moskovskiye Vedomosti*.[5] They are not renouncing democracy (what a scandalous libel!) but only "intellectualism".

Belinsky's letter to Gogol,[6] declares *Vekhi*, is a "lurid and classical expression of intellectualist sentiment" (56). "The history of our publicist literature, after Belinsky, in the sense of an understanding of life, is a sheer nightmare" (82).

Well, well. The serf peasants' hostility to serfdom is obviously an "intellectualist" sentiment. The history of the protest and struggle of the broadest masses of the population from 1861 to 1905 against the survivals of feudalism throughout the whole system of Russian life is evidently a "sheer nightmare". Or, perhaps, in the opinion of our wise and educated authors, Belinsky's sentiments in the letter to Gogol did not depend on the feelings of the serf peasants? The history of our publicist literature did not depend on the indignation of the popular masses against the survivals of feudal oppression?

Moskovskiye Vedomosti has always tried to prove that Russian democracy, beginning with Belinsky at least, in no way expresses the interests of the broadest masses of the population

in the struggle for the elementary rights of the people, violated by feudal institutions, but expresses only "intellectualist sentiments".

Vekhi has the same programme as *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* both in philosophy and in publicist matters. In philosophy, however, the liberal renegades decided to tell the whole truth, to reveal *all* their programme (war on materialism and the materialist interpretation of positivism, restoration of mysticism and the mystical world outlook), whereas on publicist subjects they prevaricate and hedge and Jesuitise. They have broken with the most fundamental ideas of democracy, the most elementary democratic tendencies, but pretend that they are breaking only with "intellectualism". The liberal bourgeoisie has decisively turned away from defence of popular rights to defence of institutions hostile to the people. But the liberal politicians want to retain the title of "democrats".

The same trick that was performed with Belinsky's letter to Gogol and the history of Russian publicist literature is being applied to the history of the recent movement.

II

As a matter of fact *Vekhi* attacks only the intelligentsia that was a voice of the democratic movement and only for that which showed it to be a real participant in this movement. *Vekhi* furiously attacks the intelligentsia precisely because this "little underground sect came out into the broad light of day, gained a multitude of

disciples and for a time became ideologically influential and even actually powerful" (176). The liberals sympathised with the "intelligentsia" and sometimes supported it secretly *as long as* it remained *merely* a little underground sect, until it gained a multitude of disciples and became actually powerful; that is to say, the liberals sympathised with democracy as long as it did not set in motion the real masses, for, as long as the masses were not drawn in, it only served the self-seeking aims of liberalism, it only helped the upper section of the liberal bourgeoisie to climb a little nearer to power. The liberal turned his back on democracy when it drew in the masses, who began to realise their *own* aims and uphold their *own* interests. Under the cover of outcries against the democratic "intelligentsia" *the war of the Cadets is in fact being waged against the democratic movement of the masses.* One of the innumerable and obvious revelations of this in *Vekhi* is its declaration that the great social movement of the end of the eighteenth century in France was "an example of a sufficiently prolonged intellectualist revolution, displaying all its spiritual potentialities" (57).

Good, is it not? The French movement of the end of the eighteenth century, please note, was not an example of the democratic movement of the masses in its profoundest and broadest form, but an example of "intellectualist" revolution! Since democratic aims have never anywhere in the world been achieved without a movement of a *homogeneous* type it is perfectly obvious that the ideological leaders of liberalism are breaking with democracy.

The feature of the Russian intelligentsia that *Vekhi* inveighs against is the *necessary* accompaniment and expression of *any* democratic movement. "The admixture of the political radicalism of intellectualist ideas to the social radicalism of popular instincts* was achieved with amazing rapidity" (141)—and this was "not simply a political mistake, not simply an error of tactics. The mistake here was a moral one." Where there are no martyred popular masses, there can be no democratic movement. And what distinguishes a democratic movement from a mere "riot" is that it proceeds under the banner of certain radical political ideas. Democratic movements and democratic ideas are not only politically erroneous, are not only out of place tactically but are morally sinful—such in essence is the real opinion of *Vekhi*, which does not differ one iota from the real opinions of Pobedonostsev. Pobedonostsev only said more honestly and candidly what Struve, Izgoyev, Frank and Co. are saying.

When *Vekhi* proceeds to define more precisely the substance of the hateful "intellectualist" ideas, it naturally speaks about "Left" ideas in general and Narodnik and Marxist ideas in particular. The Narodniks are accused of "spurious love for the peasantry" and the Marxists "for the proletariat" (9). Both are blasted to smithereens for "idolisation of the people" (59, 59-60). To the odious "intellectual" "god is the people, the sole aim is the happiness of the majority"

* "Of the martyred popular masses" is the phrase used on the same page, two lines down

(159). "The stormy oratory of the atheistic Left bloc" (29)—this is what impressed itself most on the memory of the Cadet Bulgakov in the Second Duma[7] and particularly aroused his indignation. And there is not the slightest doubt that Bulgakov has expressed here, somewhat more conspicuously than others, the general Cadet psychology, he has voiced the cherished thoughts of the whole Cadet Party.

That for a liberal the distinction between Narodism and Marxism is obliterated is not accidental, but inevitable. It is not the "trick" of the writer (who is perfectly aware of the distinction) but a logical expression of the present nature of liberalism. At the *present* time what the liberal bourgeoisie in Russia dreads and abominates is not so much the socialist movement of the working class in Russia as the democratic movement both of the workers and the peasants, i.e., it dreads and abominates what Narodism and Marxism have in common, their defence of democracy by appealing to the masses. It is characteristic of the present period that liberalism in Russia has decisively turned against democracy; quite naturally it is not concerned either with the distinctions within democracy or with the further aims, vistas and prospects which will be unfolded when democracy is achieved.

Vekhi simply teems with catchwords like "idolisation of the people". This is not surprising, for the liberal bourgeoisie, which has become frightened of the people, has no alternative but to shout about the democrats' "idolisation of the people". The retreat cannot but be covered

by an extra loud roll of the drums. In point of fact, it is impossible to deny outright that it was in the shape of the workers' and peasants' deputies that the first two Dumas expressed the real interests, demands and views of the mass of the workers and peasants. Yet it was just these "intellectualist"* deputies who infected the Cadets with their abysmal *hatred of the "Lefts"* because of the exposure of the Cadets' everlasting retreats from democracy. In point of fact, it is impossible to deny outright the justice of the "four-point electoral system" demand[9]; yet no political leader who is at all honest has the slightest doubt that in contemporary Russia elections on the "four-point" system, really democratic elections, would give an overwhelming majority to the Trudovik deputies together with the deputies of the workers' party.

Nothing remains for the back-sliding liberal bourgeoisie but to conceal its break with democracy by means of catchwords from the vocabulary of *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* and *Novoye Vremya*[10]; the whole symposium *Vekhi* positively teems with them.

Vekhi is a veritable torrent of reactionary mud poured on the head of democracy. Of course the publicists of *Novoye Vremya*—Rozanov,

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* *Vekhi*'s distortion of the ordinary meaning of the word "intellectual" is really laughable We have only to look through the list of deputies in the first two Dumas to see at once the overwhelming majority of peasants among the Trudoviks,[8] the predominance of workers among the Social-Democrats and the concentration of the mass of the bourgeois intelligentsia among the Cadets

Menshikov and A. Stolypin—have hastened to salute *Vekhi* with their kisses. Of course, Anthony, Bishop of Volhynia, is enraptured with this publication of the leaders of liberalism.

"When the intellectual," says *Vekhi*, "reflected upon his duty to the people, he never arrived at the thought that the idea of personal responsibility expressed in the principle of duty must be applied not only to him, the intellectual, but to the people as well" (139). The democrat reflected on the extension of the rights and liberty of the people, clothing this thought in words about the "duty" of the upper classes to the people. The democrat could never and will never arrive at the thought that in a country prior to reform or in a country with a June 3 constitution[11] there could be any question of "responsibility" of the people to the ruling classes. To arrive at this thought the democrat, or so-called democrat, must be completely converted into a counter-revolutionary liberal.

"Egoism, self-assertion is a great power," we read in *Vekhi*, "this is what makes the Western bourgeoisie a mighty unconscious instrument of God's will on earth" (95). This is nothing more than a paraphrase flavoured with incense of the celebrated "Enrichissez vous!—enrich yourselves!"—or of our Russian motto: "We put our stake on the strong!"[12] When the bourgeoisie were helping the people to fight for freedom they declared this struggle to be a divine cause. When they became frightened of the people and turned to supporting all kinds of medievalism against the people, they declared as a divine cause "egoism", self-enrichment, a chauvinistic

foreign policy, etc. Such was the case all over Europe. It is being repeated in Russia.

"The revolution should virtually and formally have culminated with the edict of October 17[13]" (136). This is the alpha and omega of Octobrism, i.e., of the programme of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. The Octobrists[14] have always said this and acted openly in accordance with it. The Cadets acted *surreptitiously* in the same way (beginning from October 17), but at the same time wanted to keep up the pretence of being democrats. If the cause of democracy is to be successful, a complete, clear and open demarcation between the democrats and the renegades is the most effective and necessary thing. *Vekhi* must be utilised for this necessary act. "We must have the courage to confess at last," writes the renegade Izgoyev, "that in our State Dumas the vast majority of the deputies, with the exception of three or four dozen Cadets and Octobrists, have not displayed knowledge required for the government and reformation of Russia" (208). Well, of course, how could clod-hopping Trudovik deputies or some sort of working men undertake such a task? It needs a majority of Cadets and Octobrists and that needs a Third Duma . . .

And so that the people and their idolators should realise their "responsibility" to the bosses in the Third Duma and Third Duma Russia the people must be taught—with the assistance of Anthony, Bishop of Volhynia—"repentance" (*Vekhi*, 26), "humility" (49), opposition to "the pride of the intellectual" (52), "obedience" (55), "the plain, coarse food of old Moses' Ten Com-

mandments" (51), struggle against "the legion of devils who have entered the gigantic body of Russia" (68). If the peasants elect Trudoviks and the workers elect Social-Democrats, this of course is just such devils' work, for by their true nature the people, as Katkov and Pobedonostsev discovered long ago, entertain "hatred for the intelligentsia" (87; read: for democracy).

Therefore, *Vekhi* teaches us, Russian citizens must "bless this government which alone with its bayonets and prisons still protects us ["the intellectuals"]* from popular fury" (88).

This tirade is good because it is frank; it is useful because it reveals the truth about the real essence of the policy of the whole Constitutional-Democratic Party throughout the period 1905-09. This tirade is good because it reveals concisely and vividly the whole spirit of *Vekhi*. And *Vekhi* is good because it discloses the whole spirit of the *real* policy of the Russian liberals and of the Russian Cadets included among them. That is why the Cadet polemic with *Vekhi* and the Cadet renunciation of *Vekhi* are nothing but hypocrisy, sheer idle talk, for in reality the Cadets collectively, as a party, as a social force, have pursued and are pursuing the policy of *Vekhi* and *no other*. The calls to take part in the elections to the Bulygin Duma[15] in August and September 1905, the betrayal of the cause of democracy at the end of the same year, their persistent fear of the people and the popular

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* Interpolations in square brackets (within passages quoted by Lenin) have been introduced by Lenin, unless otherwise indicated —*Ed*

movement and systematic opposition to the deputies of the workers and peasants in the first two Dumas, the voting for the budget, the speeches of Karaulov on religion and Berezovsky on the agrarian question in the Third Duma, the visit to London[16]—these are only a few of the innumerable *landmarks* of just *that* policy which has been ideologically proclaimed in *Vekhi*

Russian democracy cannot make a single step forward until it understands the essence of this policy and the class roots of it

Novy Dyen No 15,
December 13 1909
Signed *V Ilyin*

Collected Works,
Vol 16, pp 123-31

From NOTES OF A PUBLICIST

1

THE "PLATFORM" OF THE ADHERENTS AND DEFENDERS OF OTZOVISM[17]

. . . The present inter-revolutionary period cannot be explained away as a mere accident. There is no doubt now that we are confronted by a special stage in the development of the autocracy, in the development of the bourgeois monarchy, bourgeois Black-Hundred[18] parliamentarism and the bourgeois policy of tsarism in the countryside, and that the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie is supporting all this. The present period is undoubtedly a *transitional* period "between two waves of the revolution", but in order to prepare for the second revolution we must master the peculiarities of this transition, we must be able to adapt our tactics and organisation to this difficult, hard, sombre transition forced on us by the whole trend of the "campaign". Using the Duma tribune, as well as all other legal opportunities, is one of the humble methods of struggle which do not result in anything "spectacular". But the transitional period is transitional precisely because its spe-

cific task is to prepare and rally the *forces*, and not to bring them into immediate and decisive action. To know how to organise this work, which is devoid of outward glamour, to know how to utilise for this purpose all those semi-legal institutions which are peculiar to the period of the Black-Hundred-Octobrist Duma,[19] to know how to uphold *even on this basis* all the traditions of revolutionary Social-Democracy, all the slogans of its recent heroic past, the entire spirit of its work, its irreconcilability with opportunism and reformism—such is the *task of the Party*, such is the task of the moment.

We have examined the new platform's first deviation from the tactics set out in the resolution of the December Conference of 1908. We have seen that it is a deviation towards otzovist ideas, ideas that have nothing in common either with the Marxist analysis of the present situation or with the fundamental premises of revolutionary Social-Democratic tactics in general. Now we must examine the second original feature of the new platform.

This feature is the task, proclaimed by the new group, of "creating" and "disseminating among the masses a new, proletarian" culture: "of developing proletarian science, of strengthening genuine comradely relations among the proletarians, of developing a proletarian philosophy, of directing art towards proletarian aspirations and experience" (p. 17).

Here you have an example of that naive diplomacy which in the new platform serves to cover up the essence of the matter! Is it not really naïve to insert *between* "science" and

"philosophy" the "strengthening of genuine comradely relations"? The new group introduces into the *platform* its supposed *grievances*, its accusations against the other groups (namely, against the orthodox Bolsheviks in the first place) that *they* have broken "genuine comradely relations". Such is precisely the *real* content of this amusing clause.

Here "proletarian science" also looks "sad and out of place". First of all, we know now of only one proletarian science—Marxism. For some reason the authors of the platform systematically avoid this, the only precise term, and everywhere use the words "scientific socialism" (pp. 13, 15, 16, 20, 21). It is common knowledge that even outright opponents of Marxism lay claim to this latter term in Russia. In the second place, if the task of developing "proletarian science" is introduced in the platform, it is necessary to state plainly just what ideological and theoretical struggle of our day is meant here and whose side the authors of the platform take. Silence on this point is a naïve subterfuge, for the *essence of the matter* is obvious to everyone who is acquainted with the Social-Democratic literature of 1908-09. In *our* day a struggle between the Marxists and the Machists[20] has come to the fore and is being waged in the domain of science, philosophy and art. It is ridiculous, to say the least, to shut one's eyes to this commonly known fact. "Platforms" should be written not in order to gloss over differences but in order to explain them.

Our authors clumsily give themselves away by the above-quoted passage of the platform

Everyone knows that it is *Machism* that is *in fact* implied by the term "proletarian philosophy"—and every intelligent Social-Democrat will at once decipher the "new" *pseudonym*. There was no point in inventing this pseudonym, no point in trying to hide behind it. In actual fact, the most influential literary nucleus of the new group is Machist, and it regards non-Machist philosophy as non-"proletarian".

Had they wanted to speak of it in the platform, they should have said, the new group unites those who will fight against non-"proletarian", i.e., non-Machist, theories in philosophy and art. That would have been a straightforward, truthful and open declaration of a well-known *ideological* trend, an open challenge to the other tendencies. When an ideological struggle is held to be of great importance for the Party, one does not hide but comes out with an open declaration of war.

And we shall call upon everyone to give a definite and clear answer to the platform's veiled declaration of a philosophical struggle against Marxism. *In reality*, all the phraseology about "proletarian culture" is just a screen for the *struggle against Marxism*. The "*original*" feature of the new group is that it has introduced *philosophy* into the Party platform without stating frankly *what* tendency in philosophy it advocates.

Incidentally, it would be incorrect to say that the real content of the words of the platform quoted above is wholly negative. They have a certain positive content. This positive content can be expressed in one name: Maxim Gorky.

Indeed, there is no need to conceal the fact already proclaimed by the bourgeois press (which has distorted and twisted it), namely, that Gorky is one of the adherents of the new group. And Gorky is undoubtedly the greatest representative of *proletarian* art, one who has done a great deal for this art and is capable of doing still more in the future. Any faction of the Social-Democratic Party would be justly proud of having Gorky as a member, but to introduce "proletarian art" into the *platform* on this ground means giving this platform a certificate of poverty, means reducing one's group to a literary *circle*, which exposes itself as being precisely "authoritarian".... The authors of the platform say a great deal against recognising authorities, without explaining directly what it is all about The fact is that they regard the Bolsheviks' defence of materialism in philosophy and the Bolsheviks' struggle against otzovism as the enterprise of individual "authorities" (a gentle hint at a serious matter) whom the enemies of Machism, they say, "trust blindly". Such sallies, of course, are quite childish. But it is precisely the Vperyodists[21] who mistreat authorities. Gorky is an authority in the domain of proletarian art—that is beyond dispute. The attempt to "utilise" (in the ideological sense, of course) *this* authority to bolster up Machism and otzovism is an *example* of how one should not treat *authorities*.

In the field of proletarian art Gorky is an enormous *asset* in spite of his sympathies for Machism and otzovism. But a *platform* which sets up within the Party a separate group of

otzovists and Machists and advances the development of alleged "proletarian" art as a special task of the group is a *minus* in the development of the Social-Democratic proletarian movement; because this platform wants to consolidate and utilise the very features in the activities of an outstanding authority which represent his weak side and are a negative quantity in the enormous service he renders the proletariat.

Published on March 6 (19) and May 25 (June 7), 1910 in *Diskussionny Listok* Nos 1 and 2
Signed *N Lenin*

Collected Works, Vol 16, pp 204-07

From YET ANOTHER ANTI-DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN

That ill-famed publication, *Vekhi*, which was a tremendous success in liberal-bourgeois society, a society thoroughly imbued with renegade tendencies, was not adequately countered, nor appraised deeply enough, in the democratic camp.

This was partly due to the fact that the success of *Vekhi* occurred at a time of almost complete suppression of the "open" democratic press.

Now Mr. Shchepetev comes forward in *Russkaya Mysl*[22] (August) with a refurbished edition of *Vekhi* ideas. This is perfectly natural on the part of a *Vekhi* organ edited by Mr. P. B. Struve, leader of the renegades. But it will be just as natural for the democrats, particularly the worker democrats, to make up now for at least a little of what they owe the *Vekhi* people.

I

Mr. Shchepetev's utterances take the form of a modest "Letter from France"—*about the Russians in Paris*. But behind this modest form there is actually a very definite "discussion" of

the Russian revolution of 1905 and the Russian democracy.

"That disturbing [Oh! Disturbing *to whom*, esteemed liberal?], troubled and thoroughly confused year 1905 is fresh in everyone's memory...."

"Troubled and thoroughly confused"! What dirt and dregs a person must have in his soul to be able to write like that! The German opponents of the revolution of 1848 called that year the "crazy" year. The same idea, or rather the same dull, base fright, is expressed by the Russian Cadet writing in *Russkaya Mysl*.

We shall counter him only with a few facts, the most objective and most "unpretentious" ones. That year wages were rising as they had never done before. Land rent was dropping. All forms of association of workers, including even domestic servants, were making unprecedented progress. Millions of inexpensive publications on political subjects were being read by the people, the masses, the crowd, the "lower ranks", as avidly as no one had ever read in Russia until then.

Nekrasov exclaimed, in times long past:

> *Ah, will there ever be a time*
> *(Come soon, come soon, O longed-for day!)*
> *When people will not buy the books*
> *Of Blücher or some silly lord,*
> *But Gogol and Belinsky's works*
> *From market stalls bring home.*[23]

The "time" longed for by one of the old Russian democrats came. Merchants stopped deal-

ing in oats and engaged in more profitable business—the sale of inexpensive democratic pamphlets. Democratic books became goods for the *market*. The ideas of Belinsky and Gogol—which endeared these authors to Nekrasov, as indeed to any decent person in Russia—ran through the whole of that new market literature.

How "troublesome"! cried the liberal pig, which deems itself educated, but in fact is dirty, repulsive, overfat and smug, when *in actual fact* it saw the "people" bringing home from the market—Belinsky's letter to Gogol.

And, strictly speaking, it is, after all, a letter from an "intellectual", announced *Vekhi*, to thunderous applause from Rozanov of *Novoye Vremya* and from Anthony, Bishop of Volhynia.

What a disgraceful sight! a democrat from among the best Narodniks will say. What an instructive sight! we will add. How it sobers up those who took a *sentimental* view of democratic issues, how it *steels* all the living and strong democratic elements, mercilessly sweeping aside the rotten illusions of the Oblomov-minded!

It is very useful for anyone who has ever been enchanted with liberalism to be disenchanted with it. And he who wishes to recall the early history of Russian liberalism will certainly see in the liberal Kavelin's attitude towards the democrat Chernyshevsky the exact prototype of the attitude adopted by the Cadet *Party* of the liberal bourgeoisie towards the Russian dem-

ocratic *movement of the masses*. The liberal bourgeoisie in Russia has "found itself", or rather its tail. Is it not time the democrats in Russia found their head?

It is particularly intolerable to see individuals like Shchepetev, Struve, Gredeskul, Izgoyev and the rest of the Cadet fraternity clutching at the coat-tails of Nekrasov, Shchedrin and others. Nekrasov, who was weak as a person, wavered between Chernyshevsky and the liberals, but all his sympathy went to Chernyshevsky. Out of the very same personal weakness, Nekrasov occasionally sounded the false note of liberal servility, but he himself bitterly deplored his "falsity" and *repented* of it *in public:*

I never sold my lyre, although at times,
When pressed by unrelenting fate,
False notes would sound among my rhymes.[24]

"False notes" is what Nekrasov himself called the liberal servility he was occasionally guilty of. As for Shchedrin, he mocked mercilessly at the liberals, whom he branded for ever by the formula "conformably to villainy".[25]

How outdated this formula is as applied to Shchepetev, Gredeskul and the other* *Vekhi* people! The point now is by no means that these

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* The objection will probably be raised that Gredeskul, as well as Milyukov and Co., *argued* with *Vekhi* So they did, but they *remained* Vekhists for all that See, inter alia, *Pravda* No 85 (See *Collected Works*, Vol 18, pp 254-55 *Ed.*)

gentlemen must *conform* to villainy. Not by a long shot! They have created *their own theory* of "villainy" on their own initiative and in their own fashion, proceeding from neo-Kantianism[26] and other fashionable "European" theories.

Nevskaya Zvezda Nos. 24 and 25, September 2 and 9, 1912
Signed *V. I.*

Collected Works, Vol. 18, pp. 312-14

THE THREE SOURCES AND THREE COMPONENT PARTS OF MARXISM[27]

Throughout the civilised world the teachings of Marx evoke the utmost hostility and hatred of all bourgeois science (both official and liberal), which regards Marxism as a kind of "pernicious sect". And no other attitude is to be expected, for there can be no "impartial" social science in a society based on class struggle. In one way or another, *all* official and liberal science *defends* wage-slavery, whereas Marxism has declared relentless war on that slavery. To expect science to be impartial in a wage-slave society is as foolishly naïve as to expect impartiality from manufacturers on the question of whether workers' wages ought not to be increased by decreasing the profits of capital.

But this is not all. The history of philosophy and the history of social science show with perfect clarity that there is nothing resembling "sectarianism" in Marxism, in the sense of its being a hidebound, petrified doctrine, a doctrine which arose *away from* the high road of the development of world civilisation. On the con-

trary, the genius of Marx consists precisely in his having furnished answers to questions already raised by the foremost minds of mankind. His doctrine emerged as the direct and immediate *continuation* of the teachings of the greatest representatives of philosophy, political economy and socialism.

The Marxist doctrine is omnipotent because it is true. It is comprehensive and harmonious, and provides men with an integral world outlook irreconcilable with any form of superstition, reaction, or defence of bourgeois oppression. It is the legitimate successor to the best that man produced in the nineteenth century, as represented by German philosophy, English political economy and French socialism.

It is these three sources of Marxism, which are also its component parts, that we shall outline in brief.

I

The philosophy of Marxism is *materialism*. Throughout the modern history of Europe, and especially at the end of the eighteenth century in France, where a resolute struggle was conducted against every kind of medieval rubbish, against serfdom in institutions and ideas, materialism has proved to be the only philosophy that is consistent, true to all the teachings of natural science and hostile to superstition, cant and so forth. The enemies of democracy have, therefore, always exerted all their efforts to "refute", undermine and defame materialism, and have advocated various forms of philosoph-

ical idealism, which always, in one way or another, amounts to the defence or support of religion.

Marx and Engels defended philosophical materialism in the most determined manner and repeatedly explained how profoundly erroneous is every deviation from this basis. Their views are most clearly and fully expounded in the works of Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach* and *Anti-Dühring*, which, like the *Communist Manifesto*,[28] are handbooks for every class-conscious worker.

But Marx did not stop at eighteenth-century materialism he developed philosophy to a higher level. He enriched it with the achievements of German classical philosophy, especially of Hegel's system, which in its turn had led to the materialism of Feuerbach. The main achievement was *dialectics*, i.e., the doctrine of development in its fullest, deepest and most comprehensive form, the doctrine of the relativity of the human knowledge that provides us with a reflection of eternally developing matter. The latest discoveries of natural science—radium, electrons, the transmutation of elements—have been a remarkable confirmation of Marx's dialectical materialism despite the teachings of the bourgeois philosophers with their "new" reversions to old and decadent idealism.

Marx deepened and developed philosophical materialism to the full, and extended the cognition of nature to include the cognition of *human society*. His *historical materialism* was a great achievement in scientific thinking. The chaos and arbitrariness that had previously reigned

in views on history and politics were replaced by a strikingly integral and harmonious scientific theory, which shows how, in consequence of the growth of productive forces, out of one system of social life another and higher system develops—how capitalism, for instance, grows out of feudalism.

Just as man's knowledge reflects nature (i.e., developing matter), which exists independently of him, so man's *social knowledge* (i.e., his various views and doctrines—philosophical, religious, political and so forth) reflects the *economic system* of society. Political institutions are a superstructure on the economic foundation. We see, for example, that the various political forms of the modern European states serve to strengthen the domination of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat.

Marx's philosophy is a consummate philosophical materialism which has provided mankind, and especially the working class, with powerful instruments of knowledge.

II

Having recognised that the economic system is the foundation on which the political superstructure is erected, Marx devoted his greatest attention to the study of this economic system. Marx's principal work, *Capital,* is devoted to a study of the economic system of modern, i.e., capitalist, society.

Classical political economy, before Marx, evolved in England, the most developed of the

capitalist countries. Adam Smith and David Ricardo, by their investigations of the economic system, laid the foundations of the *labour theory of value*. Marx continued their work; he provided a proof of the theory and developed it consistently. He showed that the value of every commodity is determined by the quantity of socially necessary labour time spent on its production

Where the bourgeois economists saw a relation between things (the exchange of one commodity for another) Marx revealed a *relation between people*. The exchange of commodities expresses the connection between individual producers through the market. *Money* signifies that the connection is becoming closer and closer, inseparably uniting the entire economic life of the individual producers into one whole. *Capital* signifies a further development of this connection: man's labour-power becomes a commodity. The wage-worker sells his labour-power to the owner of land, factories and instruments of labour. The worker spends one part of the day covering the cost of maintaining himself and his family (wages), while the other part of the day he works without remuneration, creating for the capitalist *surplus-value*, the source of profit, the source of the wealth of the capitalist class.

The doctrine of surplus-value is the cornerstone of Marx's economic theory.

Capital, created by the labour of the worker, crushes the worker, ruining small proprietors and creating an army of unemployed. In industry, the victory of large-scale production is

immediately apparent, but the same phenomenon is also to be observed in agriculture, where the superiority of large-scale capitalist agriculture is enhanced, the use of machinery increases and the peasant economy, trapped by money-capital, declines and falls into ruin under the burden of its backward technique. The decline of small-scale production assumes different forms in agriculture, but the decline itself is an indisputable fact.

By destroying small-scale production, capital leads to an increase in productivity of labour and to the creation of a monopoly position for the associations of big capitalists. Production itself becomes more and more social—hundreds of thousands and millions of workers become bound together in a regular economic organism —but the product of this collective labour is appropriated by a handful of capitalists. Anarchy of production, crises, the furious chase after markets and the insecurity of existence of the mass of the population are intensified

By increasing the dependence of the workers on capital, the capitalist system creates the great power of united labour.

Marx traced the development of capitalism from embryonic commodity economy, from simple exchange, to its highest forms, to large-scale production.

And the experience of all capitalist countries, old and new, year by year demonstrates clearly the truth of this Marxian doctrine to increasing numbers of workers.

Capitalism has triumphed all over the world, but this triumph is only the prelude to the triumph of labour over capital.

III

When feudalism was overthrown, and "*free*" capitalist society appeared in the world, it at once became apparent that this freedom meant a new system of oppression and exploitation of the working people. Various socialist doctrines immediately emerged as a reflection of and protest against this oppression. Early socialism, however, was *utopian* socialism. It criticised capitalist society, it condemned and damned it, it dreamed of its destruction, it had visions of a better order and endeavoured to convince the rich of the immorality of exploitation.

But utopian socialism could not indicate the real solution. It could not explain the real nature of wage-slavery under capitalism, it could not reveal the laws of capitalist development, or show what *social force* is capable of becoming the creator of a new society.

Meanwhile, the stormy revolutions which everywhere in Europe, and especially in France, accompanied the fall of feudalism, of serfdom, more and more clearly revealed the *struggle of classes* as the basis and the driving force of all development.

Not a single victory of political freedom over the feudal class was won except against desperate resistance. Not a single capitalist country evolved on a more or less free and democratic

basis except by a life-and-death struggle between the various classes of capitalist society.

The genius of Marx lies in his having been the first to deduce from this the lesson world history teaches and to apply that lesson consistently. The deduction he made is the doctrine of the *class struggle*.

People always have been the foolish victims of deception and self-deception in politics, and they always will be until they have learnt to seek out the *interests* of some class or other behind all moral, religious, political and social phrases, declarations and promises. Champions of reforms and improvements will always be fooled by the defenders of the old order until they realise that every old institution, however barbarous and rotten it may appear to be, is kept going by the forces of certain ruling classes. And there is *only one* way of smashing the resistance of those classes, and that is to find, in the very society which surrounds us, the forces which can—and, owing to their social position, *must*—constitute the power capable of sweeping away the old and creating the new, and to enlighten and organise those forces for the struggle.

Marx's philosophical materialism alone has shown the proletariat the way out of the spiritual slavery in which all oppressed classes have hitherto languished. Marx's economic theory alone has explained the true position of the proletariat in the general system of capitalism.

Independent organisations of the proletariat are multiplying all over the world, from America

to Japan and from Sweden to South Africa. The proletariat is becoming enlightened and educated by waging its class struggle; it is ridding itself of the prejudices of bourgeois society; it is rallying its ranks ever more closely and is learning to gauge the measure of its successes; it is steeling its forces and is growing irresistibly.

Prosveshchenye No 3,
March 1913
Signed *V I*

Collected Works,
Vol 19, pp 23-28

From CRITICAL REMARKS ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION

The slogan of national culture is a bourgeois (and often also a Black-Hundred and clerical) fraud. Our slogan is: the international culture of democracy and of the world working-class movement.

Here the Bundist[29] Mr. Liebman rushes into the fray and annihilates me with the following deadly tirade:

> "Anyone in the least familiar with the national question knows that international culture is not non-national culture (culture without a national form); non-national culture, which must not be Russian, Jewish, or Polish, but only pure culture, is nonsense, international ideas can appeal to the working class only when they are adapted to the language spoken by the worker, and to the concrete national conditions under which he lives, the worker should not be indifferent to the condition and development of his national culture, because it is through it, and only through it, that he is able to participate in the 'international culture of democracy and of the world working-class movement'. This is well known, but V. I turns a deaf ear to it all...."

Ponder over this typically Bundist argument, designed, if you please, to demolish the Marxist thesis that I advanced. With the air of supreme

self-confidence of one who is "familiar with the national question", this Bundist passes off ordinary bourgeois views as "well-known" axioms

It is true, my dear Bundist, that international culture is not non-national. Nobody said that it was Nobody has proclaimed a "pure" culture, either Polish, Jewish, or Russian, etc., and your jumble of empty words is simply an attempt to distract the reader's attention and to obscure the issue with tinkling words

The *elements* of democratic and socialist culture are present, if only in rudimentary form, in *every* national culture, since in *every* nation there are toiling and exploited masses, whose conditions of life inevitably give rise to the ideology of democracy and socialism. But *every* nation also possesses a bourgeois culture (and most nations a reactionary and clerical culture as well) in the form, not merely of "elements", but of the *dominant* culture Therefore, the general "national culture" *is* the culture of the landlords, the clergy and the bourgeoisie. This fundamental and, for a Marxist, elementary truth, was kept in the background by the Bundist, who "drowned" it in his jumble of words, i e , *instead of* revealing and clarifying the class gulf to the reader, he in fact obscured it. *In fact*, the Bundist acted like a bourgeois, whose every interest requires the spreading of a belief in a non-class national culture.

In advancing the slogan of "the international culture of democracy and of the world working-class movement", we take *from each* national culture *only* its democratic and socialist elements;

we take them *only* and *absolutely* in opposition to the bourgeois culture and the bourgeois nationalism of *each* nation.

Written in October-December 1913

Published in November-December 1913, in the journal *Prosveshchenye* Nos 10, 11 and 12
Signed *V Ilyin*

Collected Works, Vol 20, pp 23-24

ON THE NATIONAL PRIDE OF THE GREAT RUSSIANS

What a lot of talk, argument and vociferation there is nowadays about nationality and the fatherland! Liberal and radical cabinet ministers in Britain, a host of "forward-looking" journalists in France (who have proved in full agreement with their reactionary colleagues), and a swarm of official Cadet and progressive scribblers in Russia (including several Narodniks and "Marxists")—all have effusive praise for the liberty and independence of their respective countries, the grandeur of the principle of national independence. Here one cannot tell where the venal eulogist of the butcher Nicholas Romanov or of the brutal oppressors of Negroes and Indians ends, and where the common philistine, who from sheer stupidity or spinelessness drifts with the stream, begins. Nor is that distinction important. We see before us an extensive and very deep ideological trend, whose origins are closely interwoven with the interests of the landowners and the capitalists of the dominant nations. Scores and hundreds of millions are being spent every year for the propaganda of ideas advantageous to those classes. It is a pretty big mill-race that takes its waters

from all sources—from Menshikov, a chauvinist by conviction, to chauvinists for reason of opportunism or spinelessness, such as Plekhanov and Maslov, Rubanovich and Smirnov, Kropotkin and Burtsev.

Let us, Great-Russian Social-Democrats, also try to define our attitude to this ideological trend. It would be unseemly for us, representatives of a dominant nation in the far east of Europe and a goodly part of Asia, to forget the immense significance of the national question—especially in a country which has been rightly called the "prison of the peoples", and particularly at a time when, in the far east of Europe and in Asia, capitalism is awakening to life and self-consciousness a number of "new" nations, large and small; at a moment when the tsarist monarchy has called up millions of Great Russians and non-Russians, so as to "solve" a number of national problems in accordance with the interests of the Council of the United Nobility[30] and of the Guchkovs, Krestovnikovs, Dolgorukovs, Kutlers and Rodichevs.

Is a sense of national pride alien to us, Great-Russian class-conscious proletarians? Certainly not! We love our language and our country, and we are doing our very utmost to raise *her* toiling masses (i.e., nine-tenths of *her* population) to the level of a democratic and socialist consciousness. To us it is most painful to see and feel the outrages, the oppression and the humiliation our fair country suffers at the hands of the tsar's butchers, the nobles and the capitalists. We take pride in the resistance to these outrages put up from our midst, from the Great

Russians; in *that* midst having produced Radishchev, the Decembrists[31] and the revolutionary commoners of the seventies[32], in the Great-Russian working class having created, in 1905, a mighty revolutionary party of the masses, and in the Great-Russian peasantry having begun to turn towards democracy and set about overthrowing the clergy and the landed proprietors.

We remember that Chernyshevsky, the Great-Russian democrat, who dedicated his life to the cause of revolution, said half a century ago "A wretched nation, a nation of slaves, from top to bottom—all slaves"[33] The overt and covert Great-Russian slaves (slaves with regard to the tsarist monarchy) do not like to recall these words. Yet, in our opinion, these were words of genuine love for our country, a love distressed by the absence of a revolutionary spirit in the masses of the Great-Russian people. There was none of that spirit at the time. There is little of it now, but it already exists. We are full of national pride because the Great-Russian nation, *too,* has created a revolutionary class, because it, *too*, has proved capable of providing mankind with great models of the struggle for freedom and socialism, and not only with great pogroms, rows of gallows, dungeons, great famines and great servility to priests, tsars, landowners and capitalists.

We are full of a sense of national pride, and for that very reason we *particularly* hate *our* slavish past (when the landed nobility led the peasants into war to stifle the freedom of Hungary, Poland, Persia and China), and our slavish present, when these selfsame landed proprietors,

aided by the capitalists, are leading us into a war in order to throttle Poland and the Ukraine, crush the democratic movement in Persia and China, and strengthen the gang of Romanovs, Bobrinskys and Purishkeviches, who are a disgrace to our Great-Russian national dignity. Nobody is to be blamed for being born a slave; but a slave who not only eschews a striving for freedom but justifies and eulogises his slavery (e.g., calls the throttling of Poland and the Ukraine, etc., a "defence of the fatherland" of the Great Russians)—such a slave is a lickspittle and a boor, who arouses a legitimate feeling of indignation, contempt, and loathing.

"No nation can be free if it oppresses other nations,"[34] said Marx and Engels, the greatest representatives of consistent nineteenth-century democracy, who became the teachers of the revolutionary proletariat. And, full of a sense of national pride, we Great-Russian workers want, come what may, a free and independent, a democratic, republican and proud Great Russia, one that will base its relations with its neighbours on the human principle of equality, and not on the feudalist principle of privilege, which is so degrading to a great nation. Just because we want that, we say: it is impossible, in the twentieth century and in Europe (even in the far east of Europe), to "defend the fatherland" otherwise than by using every revolutionary means to combat the monarchy, the landowners and the capitalists of one's *own* fatherland, i.e., the *worst* enemies of our country. We say that the Great Russians cannot "defend the fatherland" otherwise than by desiring the defeat of tsarism

in any war, this as the lesser evil to nine-tenths of the inhabitants of Great Russia. For tsarism not only oppresses those nine-tenths economically and politically, but also demoralises, degrades, dishonours and prostitutes them by teaching them to oppress other nations and to cover up this shame with hypocritical and quasi-patriotic phrases.

The objection may be advanced that, besides tsarism and under its wing, another historical force has arisen and become strong, viz., Great-Russian capitalism, which is carrying on progressive work by economically centralising and welding together vast regions. This objection, however, does not excuse, but on the contrary still more condemns our socialist-chauvinists, who should be called tsarist-Purishkevich socialists (just as Marx called the Lassalleans Royal-Prussian socialists).[35] Let us even assume that history will decide in favour of Great-Russian dominant-nation capitalism, and against the hundred and one small nations. That is not impossible, for the entire history of capital is one of violence and plunder, blood and corruption. We do not advocate preserving small nations at all costs; *other conditions being equal*, we are decidedly for centralisation and are opposed to the petty-bourgeois ideal of federal relationships. Even if our assumption were true, however, it is, firstly, not our business, or that of democrats (let alone of socialists), to help Romanov-Bobrinsky-Purishkevich throttle the Ukraine, etc. In his own Junker[36] fashion, Bismarck accomplished a progressive historical task, but he would be a fine "Marxist" indeed who, on such

grounds, thought of justifying socialist support for Bismarck! Moreover, Bismarck promoted economic development by bringing together the disunited Germans, who were being oppressed by other nations. The economic prosperity and rapid development of Great Russia, however, require that the country be liberated from Great-Russian oppression of other nations—that is the difference that our admirers of the true-Russian would-be Bismarcks overlook.

Secondly, if history were to decide in favour of Great-Russian dominant-nation capitalism, it follows hence that the *socialist* role of the Great-Russian proletariat, as the principal driving force of the communist revolution engendered by capitalism, will be all the greater. The proletarian revolution calls for a prolonged education of the workers in the spirit of the *fullest* national equality and brotherhood. Consequently, the interests of the Great-Russian proletariat require that the masses be systematically educated to champion—most resolutely, consistently, boldly and in a revolutionary manner—complete equality and the right to self-determination for all the nations oppressed by the Great Russians. The interests of the Great Russians' national pride (understood, not in the slavish sense) coincide with the *socialist* interests of the Great-Russian (and all other) proletarians. Our model will always be Marx, who, after living in Britain for decades and becoming half-English, demanded freedom and national independence for Ireland in the interests of the socialist movement of the British workers.

In the second hypothetical case we have considered, our home-grown socialist-chauvinists, Plekhanov, etc , etc., will prove traitors, not only to their own country—a free and democratic Great Russia, but also to the proletarian brotherhood of all the nations of Russia, i e., to the cause of socialism.

Sotsial Demokrat No 35,
December 12, 1914

Collected Works,
Vol 21, pp 102 06

From REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE PROGRAMME AND ON CHANGING THE NAME OF THE PARTY DELIVERED AT THE SEVENTH CONGRESS OF THE R.C.P.(B.)

March 8, 1918

...Whatever may be the fate of our revolution, of our contingent of the international proletarian army, whatever may be the future complications of the revolution, the objective situation of the imperialist countries embroiled in a war[37] that has reduced the most advanced countries to starvation, ruin and barbarity, that situation, in any case, is hopeless. And here I must repeat what Frederick Engels said thirty years ago, in 1887, when appraising the probable prospects of a European war. He said that crowns would lie around in Europe by the dozen and nobody would want to pick them up; he said that incredible ruin would fall to the lot of the European countries, and that there could be only one outcome to the horrors of a European war—he put it this way—"either the victory of the working class or the creation of conditions that would make that victory possible

and necessary".[38] Engels expressed himself on this score with exceptional precision and caution. Unlike those people who distort Marxism and offer their belated pseudo-philosophising about socialism being impossible in conditions of ruin, Engels realised full well that every war, even in an advanced society, would create not only devastation, barbarity, torment, calamities for the masses, who would drown in blood, and that there could be no guarantee that it would lead to the victory of socialism; he said it would be "either the victory of the working class or the creation of conditions that would make that victory possible and necessary", i.e., that there was, consequently, the possibility of a number of difficult stages of transition in view of the tremendous destruction of culture and the means of production, but that the result could be only the rise of the working class, the vanguard of all working people, and the beginning of its taking over power into its own hands for the creation of a socialist society. For no matter to what extent culture has been destroyed, it cannot be removed from history; it will be difficult to restore but no destruction will ever mean the complete disappearance of that culture. Some part of it, some material remains of that culture will be indestructible, the difficulties will be only in restoring it.

Published in 1923 in the book: *Seventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party Verbatim Report March 6-8, 1918*

Collected Works, Vol 27, pp 128-29

From ORIGINAL VERSION OF THE ARTICLE "THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT"

CHAPTER V

The task of state administration that has now acquired primary importance for Soviet power also has the following specific feature, namely, that now, perhaps for the first time in the recent history of civilisation, it is a question of an administration at a period when priority is accorded to economics and not to politics. The term "administration" is usually associated first and foremost with activities that are predominantly or purely political. Yet the very foundation, the very essence of Soviet power, just as the very essence of the transition from capitalist to socialist society, consists in the fact that political tasks are subordinated to economic tasks. Now, especially after more than four months' experience of Soviet power in Russia, it should be quite obvious to us that at present the task of state administration is reduced primarily and above all to the purely economic task of healing the country's war wounds, restoring its productive forces, establishing an

accounting system and control over the production and distribution of products, raising labour productivity, in short, it is reduced to the task of economic reorganisation.

It can be said that this task falls into two parts: (1) establishing an accounting system and control over the production and distribution of products in the most extensive and universal forms and (2) raising labour productivity. These tasks can be solved by a collective or state in transition to socialism only if capitalism has created the adequate economic, social, cultural and political prerequisites. Without large-scale machine production and a more or less developed railway network, without developed postal and telegraph communication and a more or less developed system of educational institutions, neither the one nor the other task could be solved on anything like a nation-wide scale and systematically. Russia has reached a stage when a number of the initial prerequisites of the transition period are in evidence. On the other hand, a number of prerequisites are missing, but they can be borrowed with comparative ease from the practical experience of neighbouring countries which are far more advanced and have been long since brought into close contact with Russia by history and international ties.

Dictated between March 23 and 28, 1918
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Collected Works, Fifth Russian edition Vol 36, pp 130-31

From REPORT ON THE ATTITUDE OF THE PROLETARIAT TO PETTY-BOURGEOIS DEMOCRATS DELIVERED AT MOSCOW PARTY WORKERS' MEETING

November 27, 1918

...We know socialism can only be built from elements of large-scale capitalist culture, and the intellectuals are one of these elements. We had to be ruthless with them, but it was not communism that compelled us to do so, it was events, which repelled from us all "democrats" and everyone enamoured of bourgeois democracy. Now we have the chance to utilise the intellectuals for socialism, intellectuals who are not socialist, who will never be communist, but whom objective events and relations are now inducing to adopt a neutral and good-neighbourly attitude towards us. We shall never rely on the intellectuals, we shall only rely on the vanguard of the proletariat that leads all workers and poor peasants. The Communist Party can rely on no other support. It is one thing, however, to rely on the class which embodies the dictatorship, and another to dominate over other classes.

You may remember what Engels said even of the peasants who employ hired labour: Most likely we shall not have to expropriate all of them.[39] We are expropriating as a general rule, and we have no kulaks in the Soviets. We are crushing them. We suppress them physically when they worm their way into the Soviets and from there try to choke the poor peasants. You see how the domination of one class is exercised here. Only the proletariat may dominate. But this is applied in one way to the small peasant, in another to the middle peasant, in another to the landowner, and in yet another to the petty bourgeois. The whole point is for us to understand this change of attitude brought about by international conditions, to understand that it is inevitable that slogans we were accustomed to during the past six months of the revolution's history should be modified as far as the petty-bourgeois democrats are concerned. We must say that we reserve the power for the same class. In relation to the petty-bourgeois democrats our slogan was one of agreement, but we were forced to resort to terror. If you co-operators and intellectuals really agree to live in good-neighbourly relations with us, then work a bit and do the jobs we give you. If you don't, you will be lawbreakers and our enemies, and we shall fight you. But if you maintain good-neighbourly relations and perform these tasks, that will be more than enough for us. Our support is secure. We've always known you were weak and flabby. But we don't deny we need you, for you are the only educated group.

Things would not be so bad if we did not have to build socialism with people inherited from capitalism. But that is the whole trouble with socialist construction—we have to build socialism with people who have been thoroughly spoiled by capitalism. That is the whole trouble with the transition—it is associated with a dictatorship which can be exercised only by one class—the proletariat. That is why we say the proletariat will set the pace since it has been schooled and moulded into a fighting force capable of smashing the bourgeoisie. Between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat stand innumerable transitional groups, and our policy to them must now be put on the lines which were envisaged by our theory, and which we are now in a position to follow in practice. We shall have to settle a number of problems and make a number of agreements and technical assignments which we, as the ruling proletarian power, must know how to set. We must know how to set the middle peasant one assignment—to assist in commodity exchange and in exposing the kulak—and the co-operators another—they have the apparatus for distributing products on a mass scale, and we must take over that apparatus. And the intellectuals must be set quite a different assignment. They cannot continue their sabotage, and they are now in a very good-neighbourly mood towards *us*. We must make use of these intellectuals, set them definite tasks and keep an eye on them and check their work; we must treat them as Marx said when speaking of office workers under the Paris Commune:

"Every other employer knows how to choose assistants and accountants for his business, and, if they for once make a mistake, to redress it promptly. If they prove to be unfit for the job, he replaces them with other, efficient assistants and accountants."[40]

We are building our state out of the elements left over by capitalism. We cannot build it if we do not utilise such a heritage of capitalist culture as the intellectuals. Now we can afford to treat the petty bourgeoisie as good neighbours who are under the strict control of the state. The class-conscious proletariat's job now is to appreciate that its domination does not mean carrying out all the tasks itself. Whoever thinks that has not the slightest inkling of socialist construction and has learnt nothing from a year of revolution and dictatorship. People like that had better go to school and learn something. But whoever has learnt something in this period will say to himself: "These intellectuals are the people I am now going to use in construction. For I have a strong enough support among the peasants." And we must remember that we can only work out the form of construction that will lead to socialism in that struggle, and in a number of agreements and trial agreements between the proletariat and the petty-bourgeois democrats.

Remember that Engels said we must act by force of example.[41] No form will be final until complete communism has been achieved. We never claimed to know the exact road. But we are inevitably moving towards communism. In

times like these every week is worth more than decades of tranquility. The six months that have elapsed since the Brest-Litovsk Peace[42] have shown a swing away from us. The West-European revolution—a revolution which is following our example—should strengthen us. We must take account of the changes taking place, we must take account of every element, and must have no illusions, for we know that the wavering will remain wavering until the world socialist revolution is completely triumphant. That may not be so soon, although the course of the German revolution leads us to hope that it may be sooner than many anticipate. The German revolution is developing in the same way as ours, but at a faster pace. In any case, our job now is to wage a desperate struggle against British and American imperialism. Just because it feels that Bolshevism has become a world force, it is trying to throttle us as fast as possible in the hope of dealing first with the Russian Bolsheviks, and then with its own.

We must make use of the wavering whom the atrocities of imperialism are driving towards us. And we shall do so. You know full well that in time of war no aid, even indirect, can be scorned. In war even the position of the wavering classes is of immense significance. The fiercer the war, the more we need to gain influence over the wavering who are coming over to us. So the tactics we have been pursuing for six months must be modified to suit the new tasks with regard to the various groups of petty-bourgeois democrats.

If I have succeeded in directing the attention of Party workers to this problem and in inducing them to seek a correct solution by systematic experiment, I may consider my task accomplished.

Pravda Nos. 264, 265,
December 5 and 6, 1918

Collected Works,
Vol. 28, pp. 213-16

From REPORT ON THE FOREIGN AND HOME POLICY OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS AT THE SESSION OF THE PETROGRAD SOVIET

March 12, 1919

BRIEF NEWSPAPER REPORT

Some of our comrades, Lenin said, express indignation at the fact that former officers and others who served the tsar are at the head of the Red Army. "Naturally, in organising the Red Army this question acquires special significance and success in this work depends on its correct presentation. But the question of specialists must be discussed on a broader scale. We must make use of them in all spheres of organisation, wherever we, lacking the experience and scientific training of the old bourgeois specialists, are ourselves naturally unable to cope with our tasks. We are not utopians who think that socialist Russia must be built up by men of a new type; we must utilise the material we have inherited from the old capitalist world. We are placing people of the old type in new conditions, keeping them under proper control, under the vigilant supervision of the proletariat, and mak-

ing them do the work we need. This is the only way we can build. If you are unable to erect the edifice with the materials bequeathed to us by the bourgeois world, you will not be able to build it at all, and you will not be Communists, but mere phrase-mongers. For the purpose of building socialism, we must make the fullest use of the science, technology and, in general, everything that capitalist Russia bequeathed to us. Of course there will be great difficulties in our way. Mistakes are inevitable. There are deserters and deliberate saboteurs everywhere. Against these, force had to be the primary weapon. But after that we must make use of the moral weight of the proletariat, strong organisation and discipline. There is no need whatever to reject useful specialists, but they must be kept within definite limits so that the proletariat can keep them under control. They must be entrusted with certain work, but a vigilant eye must also be kept on them, commissars must be placed over them to thwart their counter-revolutionary scheming. At the same time we must also learn from them. Above all, no political concessions whatever must be made to these gentlemen whose services we are using wherever possible. We have already succeeded in doing this to some extent. We have passed from the stage of suppressing the capitalists to the stage of using their services, and this, perhaps, is one of the most important achievements in the field of internal development during the past year.

'One of the most serious problems affecting our cultural development is that of the rural

districts. Soviet power presupposes the widest possible support of the working people. This sums up our entire rural policy during this period. It was necessary to link up the urban proletariat with the rural poor, and this we have done. Today they are most intimately connected by thousands of imperceptible threads. Here, as elsewhere, we encounter considerable difficulties, for the peasants are accustomed to feel that they are independent proprietors. They are accustomed to sell their grain freely, and every peasant regarded this as his inalienable right. Now a tremendous effort is needed to convince them definitely that only by means of the communist organisation of production shall we be able to cope with the devastation caused by the war. This must be done by persuasion and not by force. . . ."

Severnaya Kommuna No. 58, March 14, 1919

Collected Works, Vol 29, pp 24-25

From THE ACHIEVEMENTS AND DIFFICULTIES OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT

The old utopian socialists imagined that socialism could be built by men of a new type, that first they would train good, pure and splendidly educated people, and these would build socialism. We always laughed at this and said that this was playing with puppets, that it was socialism as an amusement for young ladies, but not serious politics.

We want to build socialism with the aid of those men and women who grew up under capitalism, were depraved and corrupted by capitalism, but steeled for the struggle by capitalism. There are proletarians who have been so hardened that they can stand a thousand times more hardship than any army. There are tens of millions of oppressed peasants, ignorant and scattered, but capable of uniting around the proletariat in the struggle, if the proletariat adopts skilful tactics. And there are scientific and technical experts all thoroughly imbued with the bourgeois world outlook, there are military experts who were trained under bourgeois conditions—if they were only bourgeois it would not be so bad, but there were also conditions of landed proprietorship, serfdom and

the big stick. As far as concerns the economy, all the agronomists, engineers and school-teachers were recruited from the propertied class; they did not drop from the skies. Neither under the reign of Tsar Nicholas nor under the Republican President Wilson were the property-less proletarians at the bench and the peasants at the plough able to get a university education. Science and technology exist only for the rich, for the propertied class; capitalism provides culture only for the minority. We must build socialism out of this culture, we have no other material. We want to start building socialism at once out of the material that capitalism left us yesterday to be used today, at this very moment, and not with people reared in hot-houses, assuming that we were to take this fairy-tale seriously. We have bourgeois experts and nothing else. We have no other bricks with which to build. Socialism must triumph, and we socialists and Communists must prove by deeds that we are capable of building socialism with these bricks, with this material, that we are capable of building socialist society with the aid of proletarians who have enjoyed the fruits of culture only to an insignificant degree, and with the aid of bourgeois specialists.

If you do not build communist society with this material, you will prove that you are mere phrase-mongers and windbags.

This is how the question is presented by the historical legacy of world capitalism! This is the difficulty that confronted us concretely when we took power, when we set up the Soviet machinery of state!

This is only half the task, but it is the greater half. Soviet machinery of state means that the working people are united in such a way as to crush capitalism by the weight of their mass unity. The masses did this. But it is not enough to crush capitalism. We must take the entire culture that capitalism left behind and build socialism with it. We must take all its science, technology, knowledge and art. Without these we shall be unable to build communist society. But this science, technology and art are in the hands and in the heads of the experts.

This is the task that confronts us in all spheres. It is a task with inherent contradictions, like the inherent contradictions of capitalism as a whole. It is a most difficult task, but a practicable one. We cannot wait twenty years until we have trained pure, communist experts, until we have trained the first generation of Communists without blemish and without reproach. No, excuse me, but we must build now, in two months and not in twenty years' time, so as to be able to fight the bourgeoisie, to oppose the bourgeois science and technology of the whole world. Here we must achieve victory. It is difficult to make the bourgeois experts serve us by the weight of our masses, but it is possible, and if we do it, we shall triumph.

When Comrade Trotsky informed me recently that the number of officers of the old army employed by our War Department runs into several tens of thousands, I perceived concretely where the secret of using our enemy lay, how to compel those who had opposed communism to build it, how to build communism with the

bricks which the capitalists had chosen to hurl against us! We have no other bricks! And so, we must compel the bourgeois experts, under the leadership of the proletariat, to build up our edifice with these bricks. This is what is difficult; but this is the pledge of victory.

Naturally, on this path, which is a new and difficult one, we have made more than a few mistakes; on this path we have met with more than a few reverses. Everybody knows that a certain number of experts have systematically betrayed us. Among the experts in the factories, among the agronomists, and in the administration, we have seen and see today at every step a malicious attitude to work, malicious sabotage.

We know that all this presents tremendous difficulties and that we cannot achieve victory by violence alone.... We, of course, are not opposed to violence. We laugh at those who are opposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat, we laugh and say that they are fools who do not understand that there must be either the dictatorship of the proletariat or the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Those who think otherwise are either idiots, or are so politically ignorant that it would be a disgrace to allow them to come anywhere near a meeting, let alone on the platform. The only alternative is either violence against Liebknecht and Luxemburg, the murder of the best leaders of the workers, or the violent suppression of the exploiters; and whoever dreams of a middle course is our most harmful and dangerous enemy. That is how the matter stands at present. Hence, when we talk

of utilising the services of the experts we must bear in mind the lesson taught by Soviet policy during the past year. During that year we have broken and defeated the exploiters and we must now solve the problem of using the bourgeois specialists. Here, I repeat, violence alone will get us nowhere. Here, in addition to violence, after successful violence, we need the organisation, discipline and moral weight of the victorious proletariat, which will subordinate all the bourgeois experts to its will and draw them into its work.

Some people may say that Lenin is recommending moral persuasion instead of violence! But it is foolish to imagine that we can solve the problem of organising a new science and technology for the development of communist society by violence alone. That is nonsense! We, as a Party, as people who have learned something during this year of Soviet activity, will not be so foolish as to think so, and we will warn the masses not to think so. The employment of all the institutions of bourgeois capitalist society requires not only the successful use of violence, but also organisation, discipline, comradely discipline among the masses, the organisation of proletarian influence over the rest of the population, the creation of a new, mass environment, which will convince the bourgeois specialists that they have no alternative, that there can be no return to the old society, and that they can do their work only in conjunction with the Communists who are working by their side, who are leading the masses, who enjoy the absolute confidence of the masses, and whose object is

to ensure that the fruits of bourgeois science and technology, the fruits of thousands of years of the development of civilisation, shall be enjoyed not by a handful of people for the purpose of distinguishing themselves and amassing wealth, but by literally all the working people.

This is an immensely difficult task, the fulfilment of which will require decades! But to carry it out we must create a force, a discipline, comradely discipline, Soviet discipline, proletarian discipline, such as will not only physically crush the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, but also encompass them completely, subordinate them to our will, compel them to proceed along our lines, to serve our cause.

I repeat that we come up against this problem every day in the work of organising our military forces, in the work of economic development, in the work of every economic council, in the work of every factory committee and of every nationalised factory. There was hardly a week during all past year that the Council of People's Commissars did not discuss and settle this question in one way or another. I am sure that there was not a single factory committee in Russia, not a single agricultural commune, not a single state farm, not a single uyezd land department which did not come up against this issue scores of times in the course of the past year's Soviet activity.

This is what makes this task so difficult, but it is also what makes it a really gratifying one. This is what we must do now, the day after the exploiters were crushed by the force of the proletarian insurrection. We suppressed their

resistance—this had to be done. But this is not the only thing that has to be done. By the force of the new organisation, the comradely organisation of the working people, we must compel them to serve us. We must cure them of their old vices and prevent them from relapsing into their exploiting practices. They have remained bourgeois, and they occupy posts as commanders and staff officers in our army, as engineers and agronomists, and these old, bourgeois people call themselves Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries.[43] It does not matter what they call themselves. They are bourgeois through and through, from head to foot, in their outlook and in their habits.

Well, what shall we do, throw them out? You cannot throw out hundreds of thousands! And if we did we should be harming only ourselves. We have no other material with which to build communism than that created by capitalism. We must not throw them out, but break their resistance, watch them at every step, make no political concessions to them, which spineless people are inclined to do every minute. Educated people yield to the policy and influence of the bourgeoisie because they acquired all their education in a bourgeois environment and from that environment. That is why they stumble at every step and make political concessions to the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie.

A Communist who says that he must not get into a state where he will soil his hands, that he must have clean, communist hands, and that he will build communist society with clean communist hands and scorn the services of the

contemptible, counter-revolutionary bourgeois co-operators, is a mere phrase-monger, because we cannot help resorting to their services.

The practical task that confronts us now is to enlist the services of all those whom capitalism has trained to oppose us, to watch them day after day, to place worker commissars over them in an environment of communist organisation, day after day to thwart their counter-revolutionary designs, and at the same time to learn from them.

The science which we, at best, possess, is the science of the agitator and propagandist, of the man who has been steeled by the hellishly hard lot of the factory worker, or starving peasant, a science which teaches us how to hold out for a long time and to persevere in the struggle, and this has saved us up to now. All this is necessary, but it is not enough. With this alone we cannot triumph. In order that our victory may be complete and final we must take all that is valuable from capitalism, take all its science and culture.

How can we take it? We must learn from them, from our enemies. Our advanced peasants, the class-conscious workers in their factories, our officials in the uyezd land departments must learn from the bourgeois agronomists, engineers, and others, so as to acquire the fruits of their culture.

In this respect, the struggle that flared up in our Party during the past year was extremely useful. It gave rise to numerous sharp collisions, but there are no struggles without sharp collisions. As a result, however, we gained prac-

tical experience in a matter that had never before confronted us, but without which it is impossible to achieve communism. I say again that the task of combining the victorious proletarian revolution with bourgeois culture, with bourgeois science and technology, which up to now has been available to few people, is a difficult one. Here, everything depends on the organisation and discipline of the advanced sections of the working people. If, in Russia, the millions of downtrodden and ignorant peasants who are totally incapable of independent development, who were oppressed by the landowners for centuries, did not have at their head, and by their side, an advanced section of the urban workers whom they understood, with whom they were intimate, who enjoyed their confidence, whom they believed as fellow-workers, if there were not this organisation which is capable of rallying the masses of the working people, of influencing them, of explaining to them and convincing them of the importance of the task of taking over the entire bourgeois culture, the cause of communism would be hopeless.

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Collected Works, Vol. 29, pp 69-75

From REPORT ON THE PARTY PROGRAMME DELIVERED AT THE EIGHTH CONGRESS OF THE R.C.P.(B.)

March 19, 1919

The question of the *bourgeois experts* is provoking quite a lot of friction and divergences of opinion. When I recently had occasion to speak to the Petrograd Soviet, among the written questions submitted to me there were several devoted to the question of rates of pay. I was asked whether it is permissible in a socialist republic to pay as much as 3,000 rubles. We have, in fact, included this question in the programme, because dissatisfaction on these grounds has gone rather far. The question of the bourgeois experts has arisen in the army, in industry, in the co-operatives, everywhere. It is a very important question of the period of transition from capitalism to communism. We shall be able to build up communism only when, with the means provided by bourgeois science and technology, we make it more accessible to the people. There is no other way of building a communist society. But in order to build it in this way, we must take the apparatus from the bourgeoisie, we must enlist all these experts in the work. We have intentionally explained this

question in detail in the programme in order to have it settled radically. We are perfectly aware of the effects of Russia's cultural underdevelopment, of what it is doing to Soviet power—which in principle has provided an immensely higher proletarian democracy, which has created a model of such democracy for the whole world—how this lack of culture is reducing the significance of Soviet power and reviving bureaucracy. The Soviet apparatus is accessible to all the working people in word, but actually it is far from being accessible to all of them, as we all know. And not because the laws prevent it from being so, as was the case under the bourgeoisie; on the contrary, our laws assist in this respect. But in this matter laws alone are not enough. A vast amount of educational, organisational and cultural work is required; this cannot be done rapidly by legislation but demands a vast amount of work over a long period. This question of the bourgeois experts must be settled quite definitely at this Congress. The settlement of the question will enable the comrades, who are undoubtedly following this Congress attentively, to lean on its authority and to realise what difficulties we are up against. It will help those comrades who come up against this question at every step to take part at least in propaganda work.

The comrades here in Moscow who are representing the Spartacists[44] at the Congress told us that in western Germany, where industry is most developed, and where the influence of the Spartacists among the workers is greatest, engineers and managers in very many of the large enterprises would come to the Spartacists,

although the Spartacists have not yet been victorious there, and say, "We shall go with you." That was not the case in our country. Evidently, there the higher cultural level of the workers, the greater proletarianisation of the engineering personnel, and perhaps a number of other causes of which we do not know, have created relations which differ somewhat from ours.

At any rate, here we have one of the chief obstacles to further progress. We must immediately, without waiting for the support of other countries, immediately, at this very moment develop our productive forces. We cannot do this without the bourgeois experts. That must be said once and for all Of course, the majority of these experts have a thoroughly bourgeois outlook. They must be placed in an environment of comradely collaboration, of worker commissars and of communist nuclei; they must be so placed that they cannot break out; but they must be given the opportunity of working in better conditions than they did under capitalism, since this group of people, which has been trained by the bourgeoisie, will not work otherwise. To compel a whole section of the population to work under coercion is impossible—that we know very well from experience. We can compel them not to take an active part in counter-revolution, we can intimidate them so as to make them dread to respond to the appeals of the whiteguards. In this respect the Bolsheviks act energetically. This can be done, and this we are doing adequately. This we have all learned to do. But it is impossible in this way to compel a whole section to work. These people

are accustomed to do cultural work, they advanced it within the framework of the bourgeois system, that is, they enriched the bourgeoisie with tremendous material acquisitions, but gave them to the proletariat in infinitesimal doses—nevertheless they did advance culture, that was their job. As they see the working class promoting organised and advanced sections, which not only value culture but also help to convey it to the people, they are changing their attitude towards us. When a doctor sees that the proletariat is arousing the working people to independent activity in fighting epidemics, his attitude towards us completely changes. We have a large section of such bourgeois doctors, engineers, agronomists and co-operators, and when they see in practice that the proletariat is enlisting more and more people to this cause, they will be conquered *morally*, and not merely be cut off from the bourgeoisie politically. Our task will then become easier. They will then of themselves be drawn into our apparatus and become part of it. To achieve this, sacrifices are necessary. To pay even two thousand million for this is a trifle. To fear this sacrifice would be childish, for it would mean that we do not comprehend the tasks before us.

The chaos in our transport, the chaos in industry and agriculture are undermining the very life of the Soviet Republic. Here we must resort to the most energetic measures, straining every nerve of the country to the utmost. We must not practise a policy of petty pinpricks with regard to the experts. These experts are not the servitors of the exploiters, they are active cul-

tural workers, who in bourgeois society served the bourgeoisie, and of whom all socialists all over the world said that in a proletarian society they would serve *us*. In this transition period we must accord them the best possible conditions of life. That will be the best policy. That will be the most economical management. Otherwise, while saving a few hundred millions, we may lose so much that no sum will be sufficient to restore what we have lost.

When we discussed the question of rates of pay with the Commissar of Labour, Schmidt, he mentioned facts like these. He said that in the matter of equalising wages we have done more than any bourgeois state has done anywhere, or can do in scores of years. Take the pre-war rates of pay: a manual labourer used to get one ruble a day, twenty-five rubles a month, while an expert got five hundred rubles a month, not counting those who were paid hundreds of thousands of rubles. The expert used to receive twenty times more than the worker. Our present rates of pay vary from six hundred rubles to three thousand rubles—only five times more. We have done a great deal towards equalising the rates. Of course, we are now overpaying experts, but to pay them a little more for giving us their knowledge is not only worth while, but necessary and theoretically indispensable. In my opinion, this question is dealt with in sufficient detail in the programme. It must be particularly stressed. Not only must it be settled here in principle, but we must see to it that every delegate to the Congress, on returning to his locality, should, in his report to his

organisation and in all his activities, secure its execution.

We have already succeeded in bringing about a thorough change of attitude among the vacillating intellectuals. Yesterday we were talking about legalising the petty-bourgeois parties, but today we are arresting the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries; by this switching back and forth we are applying a very definite system. A consistent and very firm line runs through these changes of policy, namely, *to cut off counter-revolution and to utilise the cultural apparatus of the bourgeoisie.* The Mensheviks are the worst enemies of socialism, because they clothe themselves in a proletarian disguise; but the Mensheviks are a non-proletarian group. In this group there is only an insignificant proletarian upper layer, while the group itself consists of petty intellectuals. This group is coming over to our side. We shall take it over wholly, as a group. Every time they come to us, we say, "Welcome!" With every one of these vacillations, part of them come over to us. This was the case with the Mensheviks and the *Novaya Zhizn* people[45] and with the Socialist-Revolutionaries; this will be the case with all these vacillators, who will long continue to get in our way, whine and desert one camp for the other—you cannot do anything with them. But through all these vacillations we shall be enlisting groups of cultured intellectuals into the ranks of Soviet workers, and we shall cut off those elements that continue to support the whiteguards.

Published in *Pravda* No 64, March 22, 1919

Collected Works, Vol 29, pp 178-82

SPEECH OF GREETING AT THE FIRST ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS ON ADULT EDUCATION

May 6, 1919

Comrades, it gives me pleasure to greet the Congress on adult education. You do not, of course, expect me to deliver a speech that goes deeply into this subject, like that delivered by the preceding speaker, Comrade Lunacharsky, who is well-informed on the matter and has made a special study of it. Permit me to confine myself to a few words of greeting and to the observations I have made and thoughts that have occurred to me in the Council of People's Commissars when dealing more or less closely with your work. I am sure that there is not another sphere of Soviet activity in which such enormous progress has been made during the past eighteen months as in the sphere of adult education. Undoubtedly, it has been easier for us and for you to work in this sphere than in others. Here we had to cast aside the old obstacles and the old hindrances. Here it was much easier to do something to meet the tremendous demand for knowledge, for free education and free development, which was felt most among

the masses of the workers and peasants; for while the mighty pressure of the masses made it easy for us to remove the external obstacles that stood in their path, to break up the historical bourgeois institutions which bound us to imperialist war and doomed Russia to bear the enormous burden that resulted from this war, we nevertheless felt acutely how heavy the task of re-educating the masses was, the task of organisation and instruction, spreading knowledge, combating that heritage of ignorance, primitiveness, barbarism and savagery that we took over. In this field the struggle had to be waged by entirely different methods; we could count only on the prolonged success and the persistent and systematic influence of the leading sections of the population, an influence which the masses willingly submit to, but often we are guilty of doing less than we could do. I think that in taking these first steps to spread adult education, education, free from the old limits and conventionalities, which the adult population welcomes so much, we had at first to contend with two obstacles. Both these obstacles we inherited from the old capitalist society, which is clinging to us to this day, is dragging us down by thousands and millions of threads, ropes and chains.

The first was the plethora of bourgeois intellectuals, who very often regarded the new type of workers' and peasants' educational institution as the most convenient field for testing their individual theories in philosophy and culture, and in which, very often, the most absurd ideas were hailed as something new, and

the supernatural and incongruous were offered as purely proletarian art and proletarian culture.[46] (*Applause.*) This was natural and, perhaps, pardonable in the early days, and the broad movement cannot be blamed for it. I hope that, in the long run, we shall try to get rid of all this and shall succeed.

The second was also inherited from capitalism. The broad masses of the petty-bourgeois working people who were thirsting for knowledge, broke down the old system, but could not propose anything of an organising or organised nature. I had opportunities to observe this in the Council of People's Commissars when the mobilisation of literate persons and the Library Department were discussed, and from these brief observations I realised the seriousness of the situation in this field. True, it is not quite customary to refer to something bad in a speech of greeting. I hope that you are free from these conventionalities, and will not be offended with me for telling you of my somewhat sad observations. When we raised the question of mobilising literate persons, the most striking thing was the brilliant victory achieved by our revolution without immediately emerging from the limits of the bourgeois revolution. It gave freedom for development to the available forces, but these available forces were petty bourgeois and their watchword was the old one—each for himself and God for all—the very same accursed capitalist slogan which can never lead to anything but Kolchak and bourgeois restoration. If we review what we are doing to educate the illiterate, I think we shall have to draw the conclusion that

we have done very little, and that our duty in this field is to realise that the organisation of proletarian elements is essential. It is not the ridiculous phrases which remain on paper that matter, but the introduction of measures which the people need urgently and which would compel every literate person to regard it his duty to instruct several illiterate persons. This is what our decree says[47]; but in this field hardly anything has been done.

When another question was dealt with in the Council of People's Commissars, that of the libraries, I said that the complaints we are constantly hearing about our industrial backwardness being to blame, about our having few books and being unable to produce enough—these complaints, I told myself, are justified. We have no fuel, of course, our factories are idle, we have little paper and we cannot produce books. All this is true, but it is also true that we cannot get at the books that are available. Here we continue to suffer from peasant simplicity and peasant helplessness; when the peasant ransacks the squire's library he runs home in the fear that somebody will take the books away from him, because he cannot conceive of just distribution, of state property that is not something hateful, but is the common property of the workers and of the working people generally. The ignorant masses of peasants are not to blame for this, and as far as the development of the revolution is concerned it is quite legitimate, it is an inevitable stage, and when the peasant took the library and kept it hidden, he could not do otherwise, for he did not know

that all the libraries in Russia could be amalgamated and that there would be enough books to satisfy those who can read and to teach those who cannot. At present we must combat the survivals of disorganisation, chaos, and ridiculous departmental wrangling This must be our main task. We must take up the simple and urgent matter of mobilising the literate to combat illiteracy. We must utilise the books that are available and set to work to organise a network of libraries which will help the people to gain access to every available book; there must be no parallel organisations, but a single, uniform planned organisation. This small matter reflects one of the fundamental tasks of our revolution If it fails to carry out this task, if it fails to set about creating a really systematic and uniform organisation in place of our Russian chaos and inefficiency, then this revolution will remain a bourgeois revolution because the major specific feature of the proletarian revolution which is marching towards communism is this organisation—for all the bourgeoisie wanted was to break up the old system and allow freedom for the development of peasant farming, which revived the same capitalism as in all earlier revolutions.

Since we call ourselves the Communist Party, we must understand that only now that we have removed the external obstacles and have broken down the old institutions have we come face to face with the primary task of a genuine proletarian revolution in all its magnitude, namely, that of organising tens and hundreds of millions of people. After the eighteen months'

experience that we all have acquired in this field, we must at last take the right road that will lead to victory over the lack of culture, and over the ignorance and barbarism from which we have suffered all this time. (*Stormy applause.*)

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A GREAT BEGINNING

HEROISM OF THE WORKERS IN THE REAR. "COMMUNIST SUBBOTNIKS"

The press reports many instances of the heroism of the Red Army men. In the fight against Kolchak, Denikin and other forces of the landowners and capitalists, the workers and peasants very often display miracles of bravery and endurance, defending the gains of the socialist revolution. The guerrilla spirit, weariness and indiscipline are being overcome; it is a slow and difficult process, but it is making headway in spite of everything. The heroism of the working people making voluntary sacrifices for the victory of socialism—this is the foundation of the new, comradely, discipline in the Red Army, the foundation on which that army is regenerating, gaining strength and growing

The heroism of the workers in the rear is no less worthy of attention. In this connection, the *communist subbotniks* organised by the workers on their own initiative are really of enormous significance. Evidently, this is only a beginning, but it is a beginning of exceptionally great importance. It is the beginning of a revolution that is more difficult, more tangible, more radical and

more decisive than the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, for it is a victory over our own conservatism, indiscipline, petty-bourgeois egoism, a victory over the habits left as a heritage to the worker and peasant by accursed capitalism. Only when *this* victory is consolidated will the new social discipline, socialist discipline, be created; then and only then will a reversion to capitalism become impossible, will communism become really invincible.

Pravda in its issue of May 17 published an article by A. J. entitled: "Work in a Revolutionary Way. *A Communist Saturday*". This article is so important that we reproduce it here in full.

"WORK IN A REVOLUTIONARY WAY
"A Communist Saturday

"The letter of the Russian Communist Party's Central Committee on working in a *revolutionary way* was a powerful stimulus to communist organisations and to Communists The general wave of enthusiasm carried many communist railway workers to the front, but the majority of them could not leave their responsible posts or find new forms of working in a revolutionary way. Reports from the localities about the tardiness with which the work of mobilisation was proceeding and the prevalence of red tape compelled the Moscow-Kazan Railway district to turn its attention to the way the railway was functioning It turned out that, owing to the shortage of labour and low productivity of labour, urgent orders and repairs to locomotives were being held up. At a general meeting of Communists and sympathisers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway district held on May 7, the question was raised of passing from words to deeds in helping to achieve victory over Kolchak The following resolution was moved

" 'In view of the grave domestic and foreign situation, Communists and sympathisers, in order to gain the upper hand over the class enemy, must spur themselves on

again and deduct an extra hour from their rest, i.e., lengthen their working day by one hour, accumulate these extra hours and put in six extra hours of manual labour on Saturday for the purpose of creating real values of immediate worth. Since Communists must not grudge their health and life for the gains of the revolution, this work should be performed without pay. *Communist Saturdays* are to be introduced throughout the district and to continue until complete victory over Kolchak has been achieved.'

"After some hesitation, the resolution was adopted unanimously.

"On Saturday, May 10, at 6 p.m., the Communists and sympathisers turned up to work like soldiers, formed ranks, and without fuss or bustle were taken by the foremen to the various jobs.

"The results of working *in a revolutionary way are evident.* The accompanying table gives the places of work and the character of the work performed.*

"The total value of the work performed at ordinary rates of pay is five million rubles; calculated at overtime rates it would be fifty per cent higher.

"The productivity of labour in loading waggons was 270 per cent higher than that of regular workers. The productivity of labour on other jobs was approximately the same.

"Jobs (urgent) were done which had been held up for periods ranging from seven days to three months owing to the shortage of labour and to red tape.

"The work was done in spite of the state of disrepair (easily remedied) of implements, as a result of which certain groups were held up from thirty to forty minutes.

"The administration left in charge of the work could hardly keep pace with the men in finding new jobs for them, and perhaps it was only a slight exaggeration when an old foreman said that as much work was done at this *communist Saturday* as would have been done in a week by non-class-conscious and slack workers.

"In view of the fact that many non-Communists, sincere supporters of the Soviet government, took part in the work, and that many more are expected on future Saturdays, and also in view of the fact that many other districts

* See p. 90.—*Ed.*

Place of work	Character of work	Number employed	Hours worked		Work performed
			Per person	Total	
Moscow. Main locomotive shops	Loading materials for the line, devices for repairing locomotives and carriage parts for Perovo, Murom, Alatyr and Syzran	48	5	240	Loaded 7,500 poods Unloaded 1,800 poods
		21	3	63	
		5	4	20	
Moscow. Passenger depot	Complex current repairs to locomotives	26	5	130	Repairs done on 1 1/2 locomotives
Moscow. Shunting yards	Current repairs to locomotives	24	6	144	2 locomotives completed and parts to be repaired dismantled on 4
Moscow. Carriage department	Current repairs to passenger carriages	12	6	72	2 third-class carriages
Perovo. Main carriage workshops	Carriage repairs and minor repairs on Saturday and Sunday	46	5	230	12 box carriages and two flat carriages
		23	5	115	
	Total . . .	205	—	1,014	4 locomotives and 16 carriages turned out and 9,300 poods unloaded and loaded

desire to follow the example of the communist railway workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway, I shall deal in greater detail with the organisational side of the matter as seen from reports received from the localities

"Of those taking part in the work, some ten per cent were Communists permanently employed in the localities The rest were persons occupying responsible and elective posts, from the commissar of the railway to commissars of individual enterprises, representatives of the trade union, and employees of the head office and of the Commissariat of Railways

"The enthusiasm and team spirit displayed during work were extraordinary. When the workers, clerks and head office employees, without even an oath or argument, caught hold of the forty-pood wheel tire of a passenger locomotive and, like industrious ants, rolled it into place, one's heart was filled with fervent joy at the sight of this collective effort, and one's conviction was strengthened that the victory of the working class was unshakable The international bandits will not crush the victorious workers, the internal saboteurs will not live to see Kolchak

"When the work was finished those present witnessed an unprecedented scene a hundred Communists, weary, but with the light of joy in their eyes, greeted their success with the solemn strains of the *Internationale* And it seemed as if the triumphant strains of the triumphant anthem would sweep over the walls through the whole of working-class Moscow and that like the waves caused by a stone thrown into a pool they would spread through the whole of working class Russia and shake up the weary and the slack

"A J"

Appraising this remarkable "example worthy of emulation", Comrade N. R. in an article in *Pravda* of May 20, under that heading, wrote:

"Cases of Communists working like this are not rare I know of similar cases at an electric power station, and on various railways On the Nikolayevskaya Railway, the Communists worked overtime several nights to lift a locomotive that had fallen into the turn-table pit In the winter, all the Communists and sympathisers on the

Northern Railway worked several Sundays clearing the track of snow; and the communist cells at many goods stations patrol the stations at night to prevent stealing But all this work was casual and unsystematic The comrades on the Moscow-Kazan line are making this work systematic and permanent, and this is new They say in their resolution, 'until complete victory over Kolchak has been achieved', and therein lies the significance of their work They are lengthening the working day of every Communist and sympathiser by one hour for the duration of the state of war, simultaneously, their productivity of labour is exemplary.

"This example has called forth, and *is bound* to call forth, further emulation A general meeting of the Communists and sympathisers on the Alexandrovskaya Railway, after discussing the military situation and the resolution adopted by the comrades on the Moscow-Kazan Railway, resolved (1) to introduce 'subbotniks' for the Communists and sympathisers on the Alexandrovskaya Railway, the first subbotnik to take place on May 17, (2) to organise the Communists and sympathisers in exemplary, model teams which must show the workers how to work and what can really by done with the present materials and tools, and in the present food situation

"The Moscow-Kazan comrades say that their example has made a great impression and that they expect a large number of *non-Party* workers to turn up next Saturday At the time these lines are being written, the Communists have not yet started working overtime in the Alexandrovskaya Railway workshops, but as soon as the rumour spread that they were to do so the mass of non-Party workers stirred themselves 'We did not know yesterday, otherwise we would have worked as well" 'I will certainly come next Saturday,' can be heard on all sides The impression created by work of this sort is very great

"The example set by the Moscow-Kazan comrades should be emulated by all the communist cells in the rear, not only the communist cells at Moscow Junction, but the whole Party organisation in Russia In the rural districts too, the communist cells should in the first place set to work to till the fields of Red Army men and thus help their families

"The comrades on the Moscow-Kazan line finished their first communist subbotnik by singing the *Interna-*

tionale If the communist organisations, throughout Russia follow this example and consistently apply it, the Russian Soviet Republic will successfully weather the coming severe months to the mighty strains of the *Internationale* sung by all the working people of the Republic ...

"To work, communist comrades!"

On May 23, 1919, *Pravda* reported the following

"The first communist 'subbotnik' on the Alexandrovskaya Railway took place on May 17 In accordance with the resolution adopted by their general meeting, ninety-eight Communists and sympathisers worked five hours overtime without pay, receiving in return only the right to purchase a second dinner, and, as manual labourers, half a pound of bread to go with their dinner"

Although the work was poorly prepared and organised the *productivity of labour was* nevertheless *from two to three times higher than usual.*

Here are a few examples.

Five turners turned eighty spindles in four hours. The productivity is 213 per cent of the usual level.

Twenty unskilled workers in four hours collected scrap materials of a total weight of 600 poods, and seventy laminated carriage springs, each weighing $3^1/_2$ poods, making a total of 850 poods. Productivity, 300 per cent of the usual level.

"The comrades explain this by the fact that ordinarily their work is boring and tiresome, whereas here they worked with a will and with enthusiasm Now, however, they will be ashamed to turn out less in regular working hours than they did at the communist subbotnik"

"Now many non-Party workers say that they would like to take part in the subbotniks The locomotive crews volunteer to take locomotives from the 'cemetery', during a subbotnik, repair them and set them going

"It is reported that similar subbotniks are to be organised on the Vyazma line"

How the work is done at these communist subbotniks is described by Comrade A. Dyachenko in an article in *Pravda* of June 7, entitled "Notes of a Subbotnik Worker". We quote the main passages from this article.

"A comrade and I were very pleased to go and do our 'bit' in the subbotnik arranged by a decision of the railway district committee of the Party, for a time, for a few hours, I would give my head a rest and my muscles a bit of exercise ... We were detailed off to the railway carpentry shop We got there, found a number of our people, exchanged greetings, engaged in banter for a bit, counted up our forces and found that there were thirty of us .. And in front of us lay a 'monster', a steam boiler weighing no less than six or seven hundred poods, our job was to 'shift' it, i e, move it over a distance of a quarter or a third of a verst, to its base. We began to have our doubts ... However, we started on the job. Some comrades placed wooden rollers under the boiler, attached two ropes to it, and we began to tug away ... The boiler gave way reluctantly, but at length it budged We were delighted After all, there were so few of us.... For nearly two weeks this boiler had resisted the efforts of thrice our number of non-communist workers and nothing could make it budge until we tackled it ... We worked for an hour, strenuously, rhythmically, to the command of our 'foreman'—'one, two, three', and the boiler kept on rolling Suddenly there was confusion, and a number of our comrades went tumbling on to the ground in the funniest fashion The rope 'let them down' ... A moment's delay, and a thicker rope was made fast.... Evening. It was getting dark, but we had yet to negotiate a small hillock, and then our job would soon be done Our arms ached, our palms burned, we

were hot and pulled for all we were worth—and were making headway. The 'management' stood round and somewhat shamed by our success clutched at a rope. 'Lend a hand, it's time you did!" A Red Army man was watching our labours, in his hands he held an accordion What was he thinking? Who were these people? Why should they work on Saturday when everybody was at home? I solved his riddle and said to him 'Comrade, play us a jolly tune We are not raw hands, we are real Communists Don't you see how fast the work is going under our hands? We are not lazy, we are pulling for all we are worth!' In response, the Red Army man carefully put his accordion on the ground and hastened to grab at a rope end .

"Suddenly Comrade U. struck up the workers' song 'Dubinushka', *'anglichanin mudrets'*, he sang, in an excellent tenor voice and we all joined in the refrain of this labour shanty *'Eh, dubinushka, ukhnem, podyornem, podyornem* .

We were unaccustomed to the work, our muscles were weary, our shoulders, our backs ached ... but the next day would be a free day, our day of rest, and we would be able to get all the sleep we wanted The goal was near, and after a little hesitation our 'monster' rolled almost right up to the base 'Put some boards under, raise it on the base, and let the boiler do the work that has long been expected of it' We went off in a crowd to the 'club room' of the local Party cell. The room was brightly lit, the walls decorated with posters, rifles stacked around the room After lustily singing the *Internationale* we enjoyed a glass of tea and 'rum', and even bread This treat, given us by the local comrades, was very welcome after our arduous toil We took a brotherly farewell of our comrades and lined up The strains of revolutionary songs echoed through the slumbering streets in the silence of the night and our measured tread kept time with the music. We sang 'Comrades, the Bugles Are Sounding', 'Arise Ye Starvelings from Your Slumbers', songs of the International and of labour

"A week passed. Our arms and shoulders were back to normal and we were going to another 'subbotnik', nine versts away this time, to repair railway waggons. Our destination was Perovo The comrades climbed on the roof of an 'American' box waggon and sang the *Inter-*

nationale well and with gusto The people on the train listened to the singing, evidently in surprise The wheels knocked a measured beat, and those of us who failed to get on to the roof clung to the steps, pretending to be 'devil-may-care' passengers The train pulled in. We had reached our destination We passed through a long yard and were warmly greeted by the commissar, Comrade G

"'There is plenty of work, but few to do it! Only thirty of us, and in six hours we have to do average repairs to a baker's dozen of waggons! Here are twin-wheels already marked. We have not only empty waggons, but also a filled cistern ... But that's nothing, we'll "make a job of it", comrades!"

"Work went with a swing Five comrades and I were working with hoists Under pressure of our shoulders and two hoists, and directed by our 'foreman', these twin-wheels, weighing from sixty to seventy poods apiece, skipped from one track to another in the liveliest possible manner One pair disappeared, another rolled into place. At last all were in their assigned places, and swiftly we shifted the old worn-out junk into a shed ... One, two, three—and, raised by a revolving iron hoist, they were dislodged from the rails in a trice Over there, in the dark, we heard the rapid strokes of hammers; the comrades, like worker bees, were busy on their 'sick' cars. Some were carpentering, others painting, still others were covering roofs, to the joy of the comrade commissar and our own The smiths also asked for our aid. In a portable smithy a rod with a coupling hook was gleaming white-hot, it had been bent by careless shunting It was laid on the anvil, scattering white sparks, and, under the experienced direction of the smith, our trusty hammers beat it back into its proper shape. Still red-hot and spitting sparks, we rushed it on our shoulders to where it had to go. We pushed it into its socket. A few hammer strokes and it was fixed We crawled under the waggon. The coupling system is not as simple as it looks, there are all sorts of contraptions with rivets and springs ...

"Work was in full swing. Night was falling The torches seemed to burn brighter than before Soon it would be time to knock off Some of the comrades were taking a 'rest' against some tires and 'sipping' hot tea. The May night was cool, and the new moon shone

beautifully like a gleaming sickle in the sky. People were laughing and joking

"'Knock off, Comrade G., thirteen waggons are enough!'

"But Comrade G. was not satisfied.

"We finished our tea, broke into our songs of triumph, and marched to the door . ."

The movement of "communist subbotniks" is not confined to Moscow. *Pravda* of June 6 reported the following:

"The first communist subbotnik in Tver took place on May 31. One hundred and twenty-eight Communists worked on the railway. In three and a half hours they loaded and unloaded fourteen waggons, repaired three locomotives, cut up ten sagenes of firewood and performed other work. The productivity of labour of the skilled communist workers was thirteen times above normal."

Again, on June 8 we read in *Pravda*:

"Communist Subbotniks

"*Saratov*, June 5. In response to the appeal of their Moscow comrades, the communist railway workers here at a general Party meeting resolved to work five hours overtime on Saturdays without pay in order to support the national economy."

* * *

I have given the fullest and most detailed information about the communist subbotniks because in this we undoubtedly observe one of the most important aspects of communist construction, to which our press pays insufficient attention, and which all of us have as yet failed properly to appreciate.

Less political fireworks and more attention to the simplest but living facts of communist construction, taken from and tested by actual life—this is the slogan which all of us, our writers, agitators, propagandists, organisers, etc., should repeat unceasingly.

It was natural and inevitable in the first period after the proletarian revolution that we should be engaged primarily on the main and fundamental task of overcoming the resistance of the bourgeoisie, of vanquishing the exploiters, of crushing their conspiracy (like the "slave-owners' conspiracy" to surrender Petrograd, in which all from the Black Hundreds and Cadets to the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries were involved[48]). But simultaneously with this task, another task comes to the forefront just as inevitably and ever more imperatively as time goes on, namely, the more important task of positive communist construction, the creation of new economic relations, of a new society.

As I have had occasion to point out more than once, among other occasions in the speech I delivered at a session of the Petrograd Soviet on March 12, the dictatorship of the proletariat is not only the use of force against the exploiters, and not even mainly the use of force. The economic foundation of this use of revolutionary force, the guarantee of its effectiveness and success is the fact that the proletariat represents and creates a higher type of social organisation of labour compared with capitalism. This is what is important, this is the source of the strength and the guarantee that the final triumph of communism is inevitable.

The feudal organisation of social labour rested on the discipline of the bludgeon, while the working people, robbed and tyrannised by a handful of landowners, were utterly ignorant and downtrodden. The capitalist organisation of social labour rested on the discipline of hunger, and, notwithstanding all the progress of bourgeois culture and bourgeois democracy, the vast mass of the working people in the most advanced, civilised and democratic republics remained an ignorant and downtrodden mass of wage-slaves or oppressed peasants, robbed and tyrannised by a handful of capitalists. The communist organisation of social labour, the first step towards which is socialism, rests, and will do so more and more as time goes on, on the free and conscious discipline of the working people themselves who have thrown off the yoke both of the landowners and capitalists.

This new discipline does not drop from the skies, nor is it born from pious wishes; it grows out of the material conditions of large-scale capitalist production, and out of them alone. Without them it is impossible. And the repository, or the vehicle, of these material conditions is a definite historical class, created, organised, united, trained, educated and hardened by large-scale capitalism. This class is the proletariat.

If we translate the Latin, scientific, historico-philosophical term "dictatorship of the proletariat" into simpler language, it means just the following:

Only a definite class, namely, the urban workers and the factory, industrial workers in general, is able to lead the whole mass of the

working and exploited people in the struggle to throw off the yoke of capital, in actually carrying it out, in the struggle to maintain and consolidate the victory, in the work of creating the new, socialist social system and in the entire struggle for the complete abolition of classes. (Let us observe in parenthesis that the only scientific distinction between socialism and communism is that the first term implies the first stage of the new society arising out of capitalism, while the second implies the next and higher stage.)

The mistake the "Berne" yellow International[49] makes is that its leaders accept the class struggle and the leading role of the proletariat only in word and are afraid to think it out to its logical conclusion. They are afraid of that inevitable conclusion which particularly terrifies the bourgeoisie, and which is absolutely unacceptable to them. They are afraid to admit that the dictatorship of the proletariat is *also* a period of class struggle, which is inevitable as long as classes have not been abolished, and which changes in form, being particularly fierce and particularly peculiar in the period immediately following the overthrow of capital. The proletariat does not cease the class struggle after it has captured political power, but continues it until classes are abolished—of course, under different circumstances, in different form and by different means.

And what does the "abolition of classes" mean? All those who call themselves socialists recognise this as the ultimate goal of socialism, but by no means all give thought to its signi-

ficance. Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organisation of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy.

Clearly, in order to abolish classes completely, it is not enough to overthrow the exploiters, the landowners and capitalists, not enough to abolish *their* rights of ownership; it is necessary also to abolish *all* private ownership of the means of production, it is necessary to abolish the distinction between town and country, as well as the distinction between manual workers and brain workers. This requires a very long period of time. In order to achieve this an enormous step forward must be taken in developing the productive forces; it is necessary to overcome the resistance (frequently passive, which is particularly stubborn and particularly difficult to overcome) of the numerous survivals of small-scale production; it is necessary to overcome the enormous force of habit and conservatism which are connected with these survivals.

The assumption that all "working people" are equally capable of doing this work would be an empty phrase, or the illusion of an antediluvian.

pre-Marxist socialist; for this ability does not come of itself, but grows historically, and grows *only* out of the material conditions of large-scale capitalist production. This ability, at the beginning of the road from capitalism to socialism, is possessed by the proletariat *alone*. It is capable of fulfilling the gigantic task that confronts it, first, because it is the strongest and most advanced class in civilised societies; secondly, because in the most developed countries it constitutes the majority of the population, and thirdly, because in backward capitalist countries, like Russia, the majority of the population consists of semi-proletarians, i.e., of people who regularly live in a proletarian way part of the year, who regularly earn a part of their means of subsistence as wage-workers in capitalist enterprises.

Those who try to solve the problems involved in the transition from capitalism to socialism on the basis of general talk about liberty, equality, democracy in general, equality of labour democracy, etc. (as Kautsky, Martov and other heroes of the Berne yellow International do), thereby only reveal their petty-bourgeois, philistine nature and ideologically slavishly follow in the wake of the bourgeoisie. The correct solution of this problem can be found only in a concrete study of the specific relations between the specific class which has conquered political power, namely, the proletariat, and the whole non-proletarian, and also semi-proletarian, mass of the working population—relations which do not take shape in fantastically harmonious, "ideal" conditions, but in the real conditions of

the frantic resistance of the bourgeoisie which assumes many and diverse forms.

The vast majority of the population—and all the more so of the working population—of any capitalist country, including Russia, have thousands of times experienced, themselves and through their kith and kin, the oppression of capital, the plunder and every sort of tyranny it perpetrates. The imperialist war, i e., the slaughter of ten million people in order to decide whether British or German capital was to have supremacy in plundering the whole world, has greatly intensified these ordeals, has increased and deepened them, and has made the people realise their meaning. Hence the inevitable sympathy displayed by the vast majority of the population, particularly the working people, for the proletariat, because it is with heroic courage and revolutionary ruthlessness throwing off the yoke of capital, overthrowing the exploiters, suppressing their resistance, and shedding its blood to pave the road for the creation of the new society, in which there will be no room for exploiters.

Great and inevitable as may be their petty-bourgeois vacillations and their tendency to go back to bourgeois "order", under the "wing" of the bourgeoisie, the non-proletarian and semi-proletarian mass of the working population cannot but recognise the moral and political authority of the proletariat, who are not only overthrowing the exploiters and suppressing their resistance, but are building a new and higher social bond, a social discipline, the discipline of class-conscious and united working

people, who know no yoke and no authority except the authority of their own unity, of their own, more class-conscious, bold, solid, revolutionary and steadfast vanguard.

In order to achieve victory, in order to build and consolidate socialism, the proletariat must fulfil a twofold or dual task: first, it must, by its supreme heroism in the revolutionary struggle against capital, win over the entire mass of the working and exploited people; it must win them over, organise them and lead them in the struggle to overthrow the bourgeoisie and utterly suppress their resistance. Secondly, it must lead the whole mass of the working and exploited people, as well as all the petty-bourgeois groups, on to the road of new economic development, towards the creation of a new social bond, a new labour discipline, a new organisation of labour, which will combine the last word in science and capitalist technology with the mass association of class-conscious workers creating large-scale socialist industry.

The second task is more difficult than the first, for it cannot possibly be fulfilled by single acts of heroic fervour; it requires the most prolonged, most persistent and most difficult mass heroism in *plain, everyday* work. But this task is more essential than the first, because, in the last analysis, the deepest source of strength for victories over the bourgeoisie and the sole guarantee of the durability and permanence of these victories can only be a new and higher mode of social production, the substitution of large-scale socialist production for capitalist and petty-bourgeois production.

* * *

"Communist subbotniks" are of such enormous historical significance precisely because they demonstrate the conscious and voluntary initiative of the workers in developing the productivity of labour, in adopting a new labour discipline, in creating socialist conditions of economy and life.

J. Jacoby, one of the few, in fact it would be more correct to say one of the exceptionally rare, German bourgeois democrats who, after the lessons of 1870-71, went over not to chauvinism or national-liberalism, but to socialism, once said that the formation of a single trade union was of greater historical importance than the battle of Sadowa.[50] This is true. The battle of Sadowa decided the supremacy of one of two bourgeois monarchies, the Austrian or the Prussian, in creating a German national capitalist state. The formation of one trade union was a small step towards the world victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie. And we may similarly say that the first communist subbotnik, organised by the workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway in Moscow on May 10, 1919, was of greater historical significance than any of the victories of Hindenburg, or of Foch and the British, in the 1914-18 imperialist war. The victories of the imperialists mean the slaughter of millions of workers for the sake of the profits of the Anglo-American and French multimillionaires, they are the atrocities of doomed capitalism, bloated with over-eating and rotting alive. The communist subbotnik organised by the

workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway is one of the cells of the new, socialist society, which brings to all the peoples of the earth emancipation from the yoke of capital and from wars.

The bourgeois gentlemen and their hangers-on, including the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who are wont to regard themselves as the representatives of "public opinion", naturally jeer at the hopes of the Communists, call those hopes "a baobab tree in a mignonette pot", sneer at the insignificance of the number of subbotniks compared with the vast number of cases of thieving, idleness, lower productivity, spoilage of raw materials and finished goods, etc. Our reply to these gentlemen is that if the bourgeois intellectuals had dedicated their knowledge to assisting the working people instead of giving it to the Russian and foreign capitalists in order to restore their power, the revolution would have proceeded more rapidly and more peacefully. But this is utopian, for the issue is decided by the class struggle, and the majority of the intellectuals gravitate towards the bourgeoisie. Not with the assistance of the intellectuals will the proletariat achieve victory, but in spite of their opposition (at least in the majority of cases), removing those of them who are incorrigibly bourgeois, reforming, re-educating and subordinating the waverers, and gradually winning ever larger sections of them to its side. Gloating over the difficulties and setbacks of the revolution, sowing panic, preaching a return to the past—these are all weapons and methods of class struggle of the bourgeois intellectuals. The proletariat will not allow itself to be deceived by them.

If we get down to brass tacks, however, has it ever happened in history that a new mode of production has taken root immediately, without a long succession of setbacks, blunders and relapses? Half a century after the abolition of serfdom there were still quite a number of survivals of serfdom in the Russian countryside. Half a century after the abolition of slavery in America the position of the Negroes was still very often one of semi-slavery. The bourgeois intellectuals, including the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, are true to themselves in serving capital and in continuing to use absolutely false arguments—before the proletarian revolution they accused us of being utopian; after the revolution they demand that we wipe out all traces of the past with fantastic rapidity!

We are not utopians, however, and we know the real value of bourgeois "arguments"; we also know that for some time after the revolution traces of the old ethics will inevitably predominate over the young shoots of the new. When the new has just been born the old always remains stronger than it for some time; this is always the case in nature and in social life. Jeering at the feebleness of the young shoots of the new order, cheap scepticism of the intellectuals and the like—these are, essentially, methods of bourgeois class struggle against the proletariat, a defence of capitalism against socialism. We must carefully study the feeble new shoots, we must devote the greatest attention to them, do everything to promote their growth and "nurse" them. Some of them will inevitably perish. We cannot vouch that precisely the "communist sub-

botniks" will play a particularly important role. But that is not the point. The point is to foster each and every shoot of the new; and life will select the most viable. If the Japanese scientist, in order to help mankind vanquish syphilis, had the patience to test six hundred and five preparations before he developed a six hundred and sixth which met definite requirements, then those who want to solve a more difficult problem, namely, to vanquish capitalism, must have the perseverance to try hundreds and thousands of new methods, means and weapons of struggle in order to elaborate the most suitable of them.

The "communist subbotniks" are so important because they were initiated by workers who were by no means placed in exceptionally good conditions, by workers of various specialities, and some with no speciality at all, just unskilled labourers, who are living under *ordinary*, i.e., *exceedingly hard*, conditions. We all know very well the main cause of the decline in the productivity of labour that is to be observed not only in Russia, but all over the world; it is ruin and impoverishment, embitterment and weariness caused by the imperialist war, sickness and malnutrition. The latter is first in importance. Starvation—that is the cause. And in order to do away with starvation, productivity of labour must be raised in agriculture, in transport and in industry. So, we get a sort of vicious circle: in order to raise productivity of labour we must save ourselves from starvation, and in order to save ourselves from starvation we must raise productivity of labour.

We know that in practice such contradictions are solved by breaking the vicious circle, by bringing about a radical change in the temper of the people, by the heroic initiative of the individual groups which often plays a decisive role against the background of such a radical change. The unskilled labourers and railway workers of Moscow (of course, we have in mind the majority of them, and not a handful of profiteers, officials and other whiteguards) are working people who are living in desperately hard conditions. They are constantly underfed, and now, before the new harvest is gathered, with the general worsening of the food situation, they are actually starving. And yet these starving workers, surrounded by the malicious counter-revolutionary agitation of the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, are organising "communist subbotniks", working overtime *without any pay*, and achieving *an enormous increase in the productivity of labour* in spite of the fact that they are weary, tormented, and exhausted by malnutrition. Is this not supreme heroism? Is this not the beginning of a change of momentous significance?

In the last analysis, productivity of labour is the most important, the principal thing for the victory of the new social system. Capitalism created a productivity of labour unknown under serfdom. Capitalism can be utterly vanquished, and will be utterly vanquished by socialism creating a new and much higher productivity of labour. This is a very difficult matter and must take a long time; but *it has been started*, and that is the main thing. If in starving Moscow, in

the summer of 1919, the starving workers who had gone through four trying years of imperialist war and another year and a half of still more trying civil war could start this great work, how will things develop later when we triumph in the civil war and win peace?

Communism is the higher productivity of labour—compared with that existing under capitalism—of voluntary, class-conscious and united workers employing advanced techniques. Communist subbotniks are extraordinarily valuable as the *actual* beginning of *communism*; and this is a very rare thing, because we are in a stage when "only the *first steps* in the transition from capitalism to communism are being taken" (as our Party Programme[51] quite rightly says).

Communism begins when the *rank-and-file workers* display an enthusiastic concern that is undaunted by arduous toil to increase the productivity of labour, husband *every pood of grain, coal, iron* and other products, which do not accrue to the workers personally or to their "close" kith and kin, but to their "distant" kith and kin, i.e., to society as a whole, to tens and hundreds of millions of people united first in one socialist state, and then in a union of Soviet republics.

In *Capital*, Karl Marx ridicules the pompous and grandiloquent bourgeois-democratic great charter of liberty and the rights of man, ridicules all this phrase-mongering about liberty, equality and fraternity *in general*, which dazzles the petty bourgeois and philistines of all countries, including the present despicable heroes of

the despicable Berne International. Marx contrasts these pompous declarations of rights to the plain, modest, practical, simple manner in which the question is presented by the proletariat—the legislative enactment of a shorter working day is a typical example of such treatment.[52] The aptness and profundity of Marx's observation become the clearer and more obvious to us the more the content of the proletarian revolution unfolds. The "formulas" of genuine communism differ from the pompous, intricate, and solemn phraseology of the Kautskys, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries and their beloved "brethren" of Berne in that they reduce everything to the *conditions of labour*. Less chatter about "labour democracy", about "liberty, equality and fraternity", about "government by the people", and all such stuff, the class-conscious workers and peasants of our day see through these pompous phrases of the bourgeois intellectual and discern the trickery as easily as a person of ordinary common sense and experience, when glancing at the irreproachably "polished" features and immaculate appearance of the "fair fellow, dontcher know", immediately and unerringly puts him down as "in all probability, a scoundrel".

Fewer pompous phrases, more plain, *everyday* work, concern for the pood of grain and the pood of coal! More concern about providing this pood of grain and pood of coal needed by the hungry workers and ragged and barefoot peasants *not* by *haggling*, not in a capitalist manner, but by the conscious, voluntary, boundlessly heroic labour of plain working men like the

unskilled labourers and railwaymen of the Moscow-Kazan line.

We must all admit that vestiges of the bourgeois-intellectual phrase-mongering approach to questions of the revolution are in evidence at every step, everywhere, even in our own ranks. Our press, for example, does little to fight these rotten survivals of the rotten, bourgeois-democratic past; it does little to foster the simple, modest, ordinary but viable shoots of genuine communism.

Take the position of women. In this field, not a single democratic party in the world, not even in the most advanced bourgeois republic, has done in decades so much as a hundredth part of what we did in our very first year in power. We really razed to the ground the infamous laws placing women in a position of inequality, restricting divorce and surrounding it with disgusting formalities, denying recognition to children born out of wedlock, enforcing a search for their fathers, etc., laws numerous survivals of which, to the shame of the bourgeoisie and of capitalism, are to be found in all civilised countries. We have a thousand times the right to be proud of what we have done in this field. But the more *thoroughly* we have cleared the ground of the lumber of the old, bourgeois laws and institutions, the clearer it is to us that we have only cleared the ground to build on but are not yet building.

Notwithstanding all the laws emancipating woman, she continues to be a *domestic slave*, because *petty housework* crushes, strangles, stultifies and degrades her, chains her to the kitchen

and the nursery, and she wastes her labour on barbarously unproductive, petty, nerve-racking, stultifying and crushing drudgery. The real *emancipation of women*, real communism, will begin only where and when an all-out struggle begins (led by the proletariat wielding the state power) against this petty housekeeping, or rather when its *wholesale transformation* into a large-scale socialist economy begins.

Do we in practice pay sufficient attention to this question, which in theory every Communist considers indisputable? Of course not. Do we take proper care of the *shoots* of communism which already exist in this sphere? Again the answer is *no*. Public catering establishments, nurseries, kindergartens—here we have examples of these shoots, here we have the simple, everyday means, involving nothing pompous, grandiloquent or ceremonial, which can *really emancipate women,* really lessen and abolish their inequality with men as regards their role in social production and public life. These means are not new, they (like all the material prerequisites for socialism) were created by large-scale capitalism. But under capitalism they remained, first, a rarity, and secondly—which is particularly important—either *profit-making* enterprises, with all the worst features of speculation, profiteering, cheating and fraud, or "acrobatics of bourgeois charity", which the best workers rightly hated and despised.

There is no doubt that the number of these institutions in our country has increased enormously and that they are *beginning* to change in

character. There is no doubt that we have far more *organising talent* among the working and peasant women than we are aware of, that we have far more people than we know of who can organise practical work, with the co-operation of large numbers of workers and of still larger numbers of consumers, without that abundance of talk, fuss, squabbling and chatter about plans, systems, etc., with which our big-headed "intellectuals" or half-baked "Communists" are "affected". But we *do not nurse* these shoots of the new as we should.

Look at the bourgeoisie. How very well they know how to advertise what *they* need! See how millions of copies of *their* newspapers extol what the capitalists regard as "model" enterprises, and how "model" bourgeois institutions are made an object of national pride! Our press does not take the trouble, or hardly ever, to describe the best catering establishments or nurseries, in order, by daily insistence, to get some of them turned into models of their kind. It does not give them enough publicity, does not describe in detail the saving in human labour, the conveniences for the consumer, the economy of products, the emancipation of women from domestic slavery, the improvement in sanitary conditions, that can be achieved with *exemplary communist work* and extended to the whole of society, to all working people.

Exemplary production, exemplary communist subbotniks, exemplary care and conscientiousness in procuring and distributing every pood of grain, exemplary catering establishments, exemplary cleanliness in such-and-such a workers'

house, in such-and-such a block, should all receive ten times more attention and care from our press, as well as from *every* workers' and peasants' organisation, than they receive now. All these are shoots of communism, and it is our common and primary duty to nurse them. Difficult as our food and production situation is, in the year and a half of Bolshevik rule there has been undoubted progress *all along the line*: grain procurements have increased from 30 million poods (from August 1, 1917 to August 1, 1918) to 100 million poods (from August 1, 1918 to May 1, 1919); vegetable gardening has expanded, the margin of unsown land has diminished, railway transport has begun to improve despite the enormous fuel difficulties, and so on. Against this general background, and with the support of the proletarian state power, the shoots of communism will not wither; they will grow and blossom into complete communism.

* * *

We must give very great thought to the significance of the "communist subbotniks", in order that we may draw all the very important practical lessons that follow from this great beginning.

The first and main lesson is that this beginning must be given every assistance The word "commune" is being handled much too freely. Any kind of enterprise started by Communists or with their participation is very often at once declared to be a "commune", it being not infrequently forgotten that this *very honourable title* must be *won* by prolonged and persistent effort, by

practical achievement in genuine communist development

That is why, in my opinion, the decision that has matured in the minds of the majority of the members of the Central Executive Committee to *repeal* the decree of the Council of People's Commissars, as far as it pertains to the title "consumers' communes",[53] is quite right. Let the title be simpler—and, incidentally, the defects and shortcomings of the *initial* stages of the new organisational work will not be blamed on the "communes", but (as in all fairness they should be) on *bad* Communists. It would be a good thing to eliminate the word "commune" from *common* use, to prohibit every Tom, Dick and Harry from grabbing at it, or to *allow this title to be borne only* by genuine communes, which have really demonstrated in practice (and have proved by the unanimous recognition of the whole of the surrounding population) that they are capable of organising their work in a communist manner. First show that you are capable of working without remuneration in the interests of society, in the interests of all the working people, show that you are capable of "working in a revolutionary way", that you are capable of raising productivity of labour, of organising the work in an exemplary manner, and then hold out your hand for the honourable title "commune"!

In this respect, the "communist subbotniks" are a most valuable exception; for the unskilled labourers and railwaymen of the Moscow-Kazan Railway *first* demonstrated *by deeds* that they are capable of working like *Communists*, and

then adopted the title of "communist subbotniks" for their undertaking. We must see to it and make sure that in future anyone who calls his enterprise, institution or undertaking a commune *without having proved* this by hard work and practical *success in prolonged effort*, by exemplary and truly communist organisation, is mercilessly ridiculed and pilloried as a charlatan or a windbag.

That great beginning, the "communist subbotniks", must also be utilised for another purpose, namely, to *purge* the Party. In the early period following the revolution, when the mass of "honest" and philistine-minded people was particularly timorous, and when the bourgeois intellectuals to a man, including, of course, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, played the lackey to the bourgeoisie and carried on sabotage, it was absolutely inevitable that adventurers and other pernicious elements should hitch themselves to the ruling party. There never has been, and there never can be, a revolution without that. The whole point is that the ruling party should be able, relying on a sound and strong advanced class, to purge its ranks.

We started this work long ago. It must be continued steadily and untiringly. The mobilisation of Communists for the war helped us in this respect: the cowards and scoundrels fled from the Party's ranks. Good riddance! *Such* a reduction in the Party's membership means an *enormous increase* in its strength and weight. We must continue the purge, and that new beginning, the "communist subbotniks", must be utilised for this purpose: members should be

accepted into the Party only after six months', say, "trial", or "probation", at "working in a revolutionary way". A similar test should be demanded of *all* members of the Party who joined after October 25, 1917, and who have not proved by some special work or service that they are absolutely reliable, loyal and capable of being Communists.

The purging of the Party, through the steadily *increasing demands* it makes in regard to working in a genuinely communist way, will improve the state *apparatus* and will bring much nearer the *final transition* of the peasants to the side of the revolutionary proletariat.

Incidentally, the "communist subbotniks" have thrown a remarkably strong light on the class character of the state apparatus under the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Central Committee of the Party drafts a letter on "working in a revolutionary way". The idea is suggested by the Central Committee of a party with from 100,000 to 200,000 members (I assume that that is the number that will remain after a thorough purging; at present the membership is larger).

The idea is taken up by the workers organised in trade unions. In Russia and the Ukraine they number about four million. The overwhelming majority of them are for the state power of the proletariat, for proletarian dictatorship. Two hundred thousand and four millions—such is the ratio of the "gear-wheels", if one may so express it. Then follow the *tens of millions* of peasants, who are divided into three main groups: the most numerous and the one standing closest

to the proletariat is that of the semi-proletarians or poor peasants; then come the middle peasants, and lastly the numerically very small group of kulaks or rural bourgeoisie

As long as it is possible to trade in grain and to make profit out of famine, the peasant will remain (and this will for some time be inevitable under the dictatorship of the proletariat) a semi-working man, a semi-profiteer. As a profiteer he is hostile to us, hostile to the proletarian state; he is inclined to agree with the bourgeoisie and their faithful lackeys, up to and including the Menshevik Sher or the Socialist-Revolutionary B. Chernenkov, who stand for freedom to trade in grain. But *as a working man*, the peasant is a friend of the proletarian state, a most loyal ally of the worker in the struggle against the landowner and against the capitalist As working men, the peasants, the vast mass of them, the peasant millions, support the state "machine" which is headed by the one or two hundred thousand Communists of the proletarian vanguard, and which consists of millions of organised proletarians.

A state more democratic, in the true sense of the word, one more closely connected with the working and exploited people, has *never yet existed.*

It is precisely proletarian work such as that put into "communist subbotniks" that will win the complete respect and love of peasants for the proletarian state. Such work and such work alone will completely convince the peasant that we are right, that communism is right, and make him our devoted ally, and, hence, will lead to

the complete elimination of our food difficulties, to the complete victory of communism over capitalism in the matter of the production and distribution of grain, to the unqualified consolidation of communism.

June 28, 1919

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Signed *N Lenin*

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From SPEECH AT THE THIRD ALL-RUSSIA CONFERENCE OF DIRECTORS OF ADULT EDUCATION DIVISIONS OF GUBERNIA EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS

February 25, 1920

To show you how I understand the tasks and the entire character of education, of teaching, training and upbringing, in their connection with the changing tasks of the Soviet Republic, I would remind you of the resolution on electrification that was adopted at the last session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee; you are probably all familiar with it. A few days ago there was an announcement in the papers that within two months (in the official printed report it said two weeks, but that was a mistake) —that within two months a plan for the electrification of the country would be elaborated to cover a minimum period of two to three years and a maximum period of ten years The character of all our propaganda, which includes purely Party propaganda, and school teaching, and adult education, must change, not in the sense that the fundamentals and general direction of teaching should be changed, but in the sense that the character of the work must be adapted to the transition to peaceful development with an

extensive plan for the industrial and economic reconstruction of the country, because the general economic difficulty and the general task is the rehabilitation of the country's economic forces so that the proletarian revolution can create the new foundations of economic life side by side with petty peasant economy. Up to now the peasant has been compelled to loan grain to the workers' state; the pieces of coloured paper called money received in return for grain do not satisfy the peasant. The peasant, being dissatisfied, is demanding his legitimate rights—in exchange for grain he wants the industrial goods that we cannot give him until we have rehabilitated the economy. Rehabilitation—that is the basic task, but we cannot rehabilitate on the old economic and technical basis. This is technically impossible and would be absurd; we have to find a new basis. This new basis is our electrification plan.

We are talking to the peasants, to the mass of less-developed people, showing them that the new transition to a higher stage of culture and technical education is necessary for the success of all Soviet development. And so, it is essential to restore the economy. The most ignorant peasant will understand that the economy has been wrecked by the war and that he cannot overcome poverty and obtain the necessary goods in exchange for grain unless we restore it. All our work in the sphere of propaganda, school and adult education must be linked up closely with this most immediate and urgent need of the peasant in order not to be isolated from the most urgent requirements of our daily life; it should

present them and their development in a way the peasant understands; it must be stressed that the way out of the situation is only through the rehabilitation of industry. Industry, however, cannot be rehabilitated on the old basis; it must be rehabilitated on the basis of modern technology, which means the electrification of industry and a higher culture. Electrification takes up to ten years' work, but it is work at a higher cultural and political level.

We shall evolve an extensive plan of work which must, in the minds of the peasantry, have a clearly defined practical aim. This cannot be done in a few months. The minimum programme should cover no less than three years. Without lapsing into utopias we may say that in ten years we shall be able to cover all Russia with a network of power stations and go over to an industry based on electricity that will meet the requirements of modern technology and put an end to the old peasant farming. This, however, requires a higher level of education and culture.

Without hiding from ourselves the fact that the immediate practical task is the restoration of transport and the delivery of food, and that with productivity at its present level we cannot undertake any extensive activities, you must nevertheless keep in mind and carry out, in the sphere of propaganda and education, the task of full rehabilitation on a basis commensurate with cultural and technical requirements. The old methods of propaganda are outmoded and until recently approached the peasants with general phrases about the class struggle; they served as grounds for the invention of all sorts

of nonsense about proletarian culture,[54] etc , but we shall very rapidly cure ourselves of all this nonsense which seems very much like an infantile disorder. In propaganda and agitation, and in school and adult education, we shall present the question in a more sober and business-like manner, a manner worthy of the people of Soviet power who have learned something in the course of two years and who will go to the peasants with a practical, business-like and clear-cut plan for the reconstruction of all industry and will demonstrate that with education at its present level the peasant and the worker will not be able to carry out this task and will not escape from filth, poverty, typhus and disease. This practical task is clearly connected with cultural and educational improvements and must serve as the central point around which we must group all our Party propaganda and activities, all our school and extra-mural teaching. This will help to get a sound grasp of the most urgent interests of the peasant masses and will link up the general improvement in culture and knowledge with burning economic requirements to such an extent that we shall increase a hundredfold the demand of the working-class masses for education. We are absolutely certain that if we have solved the difficult war problem in two years, we shall solve a still more difficult problem—the cultural and educational problem—in five to ten years.

These are the ideas I wished to express to you. (*Applause.*)

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From SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE THIRD ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF WATER TRANSPORT WORKERS

March 15, 1920

Earlier revolutions perished because the workers were unable to retain power by means of a firm dictatorship and did not realise that they could not retain power by dictatorship, by force, by coercion alone; power can be maintained only by adopting the whole experience of cultured, technically-equipped, progressive capitalism and by enlisting the services of all these people. When workers undertaking the job of management for the first time adopt an unfriendly attitude towards the expert, the bourgeois, the capitalist who only recently was a director, who raked in millions and oppressed the workers, we say—and no doubt the majority of you also say—that these workers have only just begun to move towards communism. If communism could be built with experts who were not imbued with the bourgeois outlook, that would be very easy; but such communism is a myth. We know that nothing drops from the skies; we know that communism grows out of capitalism and can be built only from its remnants; they are bad

remnants, it is true, but there are no others. Whoever dreams of a mythical communism should be driven from every business conference, and only those should be allowed to remain who know how to get things done with the remnants of capitalism. There are tremendous difficulties in the work, but it is fruitful work, and every expert must be treasured as being the only vehicle of technology and culture, without whom there can be nothing, without whom there can be no communism.

Pravda Nos 59 and 60,
March 17 and 18 1920
Izvestia Nos 59, 61 and 62,
March 17, 20 and 21, 1920

Collected Works
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THE TASKS OF THE YOUTH LEAGUES

SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE THIRD ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE

October 2, 1920

(*The Congress greets Lenin with a tremendous ovation*) Comrades, today I would like to talk on the fundamental tasks of the Young Communist League and, in this connection, on what the youth organisations in a socialist republic should be like in general.

It is all the more necessary to dwell on this question because in a certain sense it may be said that it is the youth that will be faced with the actual task of creating a communist society. For it is clear that the generation of working people brought up in capitalist society can, at best, accomplish the task of destroying the foundations of the old, the capitalist way of life, which was built on exploitation. At best it will be able to accomplish the tasks of creating a social system that will help the proletariat and the working classes retain power and lay a firm foundation, which can be built on only by a generation that is starting to work under the new conditions, in a situation in which relations

based on the exploitation of man by man no longer exist.

And so, in dealing from this angle with the tasks confronting the youth, I must say that the tasks of the youth in general, and of the Young Communist Leagues and all other organisations in particular, might be summed up in a single word. learn.

Of course, this is only a "single word". It does not reply to the principal and most essential questions: what to learn, and how to learn? And the whole point here is that, with the transformation of the old, capitalist society, the upbringing, training and education of the new generations that will create the communist society cannot be conducted on the old lines. The teaching, training and education of the youth must proceed from the material that has been left to us by the old society. We can build communism only on the basis of the totality of knowledge, organisations and institutions, only by using the stock of human forces and means that have been left to us by the old society. Only by radically remoulding the teaching, organisation and training of the youth shall we be able to ensure that the efforts of the younger generation will result in the creation of a society that will be unlike the old society, i e., in the creation of a communist society. That is why we must deal in detail with the question of what we should teach the youth and how the youth should learn if it really wants to justify the name of communist youth, and how it should be trained so as to be able to complete and consummate what we have started.

I must say that the first and most natural reply would seem to be that the Youth League, and the youth in general, who want to advance to communism, should learn communism.

But this reply—"learn communism"—is too general. What do we need in order to learn communism? What must be singled out from the sum of general knowledge so as to acquire a knowledge of communism? Here a number of dangers arise, which very often manifest themselves whenever the task of learning communism is presented incorrectly, or when it is interpreted in too one-sided a manner.

Naturally, the first thought that enters one's mind is that learning communism means assimilating the sum of knowledge that is contained in communist manuals, pamphlets and books. But such a definition of the study of communism would be too crude and inadequate. If the study of communism consisted solely in assimilating what is contained in communist books and pamphlets, we might all too easily obtain communist text-jugglers or braggarts, and this would very often do us harm, because such people, after learning by rote what is set forth in communist books and pamphlets, would prove incapable of combining the various branches of knowledge, and would be unable to act in the way communism really demands.

One of the greatest evils and misfortunes left to us by the old, capitalist society is the complete rift between books and practical life; we have had books explaining everything in the best possible manner, yet in most cases these books

contained the most pernicious and hypocritical lies, a false description of capitalist society.

That is why it would be most mistaken merely to assimilate book knowledge about communism. No longer do our speeches and articles merely reiterate what used to be said about communism, because our speeches and articles are connected with our daily work in all fields. Without work and without struggle, book knowledge of communism obtained from communist pamphlets and works is absolutely worthless, for it would continue the old separation of theory and practice, the old rift which was the most pernicious feature of the old, bourgeois society.

It would be still more dangerous to set about assimilating only communist slogans. Had we not realised this danger in time, and had we not directed all our efforts to averting this danger, the half million or million young men and women who would have called themselves Communists after studying communism in this way would only greatly prejudice the cause of communism.

The question arises: how is all this to be blended for the study of communism? What must we take from the old schools, from the old kind of science? It was the declared aim of the old type of school to produce men with an all-round education, to teach the sciences in general. We know that this was utterly false, since the whole of society was based and maintained on the division of people into classes, into exploiters and oppressed. Since they were thoroughly imbued with the class spirit, the old schools naturally gave knowledge only to the

children of the bourgeoisie. Every word was falsified in the interests of the bourgeoisie. In these schools the younger generation of workers and peasants were not so much educated as drilled in the interests of that bourgeoisie. They were trained in such a way as to be useful servants of the bourgeoisie, able to create profits for it without disturbing its peace and leisure. That is why, while rejecting the old type of schools, we have made it our task to take from it only what we require for genuine communist education.

This brings me to the reproaches and accusations which we constantly hear levelled at the old schools, and which often lead to wholly wrong conclusions. It is said that the old school was a school of purely book knowledge, of ceaseless drilling and grinding. That is true, but we must distinguish between what was bad in the old schools and what is useful to us, and we must be able to select from it what is necessary for communism.

The old schools provided purely book knowledge; they compelled their pupils to assimilate a mass of useless, superfluous and barren knowledge, which cluttered up the brain and turned the younger generation into bureaucrats regimented according to a single pattern. But it would mean falling into a grave error for you to try to draw the conclusion that one can become a Communist without assimilating the wealth of knowledge amassed by mankind. It would be mistaken to think it sufficient to learn communist slogans and the conclusions of communist science, without acquiring that sum of

knowledge of which communism itself is a result. Marxism is an example which shows how communism arose out of the sum of human knowledge.

You have read and heard that communist theory—the science of communism created in the main by Marx, this doctrine of Marxism—has ceased to be the work of a single socialist of the nineteenth century, even though he was a genius, and that it has become the doctrine of millions and tens of millions of proletarians all over the world, who are applying it in their struggle against capitalism. If you were to ask why the teachings of Marx have been able to win the hearts and minds of millions and tens of millions of the most revolutionary class, you would receive only one answer: it was because Marx based his work on the firm foundation of the human knowledge acquired under capitalism. After making a study of the laws governing the development of human society, Marx realised the inevitability of capitalism developing towards communism. What is most important is that he proved this on the sole basis of a most precise, detailed and profound study of this capitalist society, by fully assimilating all that earlier science had produced. He critically reshaped everything that had been created by human society, without ignoring a single detail. He reconsidered, subjected to criticism, and verified on the working-class movement everything that human thinking had created, and therefrom formulated conclusions which people hemmed in by bourgeois limitations or bound by bourgeois prejudices could not draw.

We must bear this in mind when, for example, we talk about proletarian culture. We shall be unable to solve this problem unless we clearly realise that only a precise knowledge and transformation of the culture created by the entire development of mankind will enable us to create a proletarian culture. The latter is not clutched out of thin air, it is not an invention of those who call themselves experts in proletarian culture. That is all nonsense. Proletarian culture must be the logical development of the store of knowledge mankind has accumulated under the yoke of capitalist, landowner and bureaucratic society. All these roads have been leading, and will continue to lead up to proletarian culture, in the same way as political economy, as reshaped by Marx, has shown us what human society must arrive at, shown us the passage to the class struggle, to the beginning of the proletarian revolution.

When we so often hear representatives of the youth, as well as certain advocates of a new system of education, attacking the old schools, claiming that they used the system of cramming, we say to them that we must take what was good in the old schools We must not borrow the system of encumbering young people's minds with an immense amount of knowledge, nine-tenths of which was useless and one-tenth distorted. This, however, does not mean that we can restrict ourselves to communist conclusions and learn only communist slogans. You will not create communism that way. You can become a Communist only when you enrich your mind

with a knowledge of all the treasures created by mankind.

We have no need of cramming, but we do need to develop and perfect the mind of every student with a knowledge of fundamental facts. Communism will become an empty word, a mere signboard, and a Communist a mere boaster, if all the knowledge he has acquired is not digested in his mind. You should not merely assimilate this knowledge, but assimilate it critically, so as not to cram your mind with useless lumber, but enrich it with all those facts that are indispensable to the well-educated man of today. If a Communist took it into his head to boast about his communism because of the cut-and-dried conclusions he had acquired, without putting in a great deal of serious and hard work and without understanding facts he should examine critically, he would be a deplorable Communist indeed. Such superficiality would be decidedly fatal. If I know that I know little, I shall strive to learn more; but if a man says that he is a Communist and that he need not know anything thoroughly, he will never become anything like a Communist.

The old schools produced servants needed by the capitalists; the old schools turned men of science into men who had to write and say whatever pleased the capitalists. We must therefore abolish them. But does the fact that we must abolish them, destroy them, mean that we should not take from them everything mankind has accumulated that is essential to man? Does it mean that we do not have to distinguish

between what was necessary to capitalism and what is necessary to communism?

We are replacing the old drill-sergeant methods practised in bourgeois society, against the will of the majority, with the class-conscious discipline of the workers and peasants, who combine hatred of the old society with a determination, ability and readiness to unite and organise their forces for this struggle so as to forge the wills of millions and hundreds of millions of people—disunited, and scattered over the territory of a huge country—into a single will, without which defeat is inevitable. Without this solidarity, without this conscious discipline of the workers and peasants, our cause is hopeless. Without this, we shall be unable to vanquish the capitalists and landowners of the whole world. We shall not even consolidate the foundation, let alone build a new, communist society on that foundation. Likewise, while condemning the old schools, while harbouring an absolutely justified and necessary hatred for the old schools, and appreciating the readiness to destroy them, we must realise that we must replace the old system of instruction, the old cramming and the old drill, with an ability to acquire the sum total of human knowledge, and to acquire it in such a way that communism shall not be something to be learned by rote, but something that you yourselves have thought over, something that will embody conclusions inevitable from the standpoint of present-day education.

That is the way the main tasks should be presented when we speak of the aim: learn communism

I shall take a practical example to make this clear to you, and to demonstrate the approach to the problem of how you must learn. You all know that, following the military problems, those of defending the republic, we are now confronted with economic tasks. Communist society, as we know, cannot be built unless we restore industry and agriculture, and that, not in the old way. They must be re-established on a modern basis, in accordance with the last word in science. You know that electricity is that basis, and that only after electrification of the entire country, of all branches of industry and agriculture, only when you have achieved that aim, will you be able to build for yourselves the communist society which the older generation will not be able to build. Confronting you is the task of economically reviving the whole country, of reorganising and restoring both agriculture and industry on modern technical lines, based on modern science and technology, on electricity. You realise perfectly well that illiterate people cannot tackle electrification, and that elementary literacy is not enough either. It is insufficient to understand what electricity is; what is needed is the knowledge of how to apply it technically in industry and agriculture, and in the individual branches of industry and agriculture. This has to be learnt for oneself, and it must be taught to the entire rising generation of working people. That is the task confronting every class-conscious Communist, every young person who regards himself a Communist and who clearly understands that, by joining the Young Communist League, he

has pledged himself to help the Party build communism and to help the whole younger generation create a communist society. He must realise that he can create it only on the basis of modern education, and if he does not acquire this education communism will remain merely a pious wish.

It was the task of the older generation to overthrow the bourgeoisie The main task then was to criticise the bourgeoisie, arouse hatred of the bourgeoisie among the masses, and foster class-consciousness and the ability to unite their forces. The new generation is confronted with a far more complex task. Your duty does not lie only in assembling your forces so as to uphold the workers' and peasants' government against an invasion instigated by the capitalists. Of course, you must do that; that is something you clearly realise, and is distinctly seen by the Communist. However, that is not enough. You have to build up a communist society. In many respects half of the work has been done. The old order has been destroyed, just as it deserved, it has been turned into a heap of ruins, just as it deserved. The ground has been cleared, and on this ground the younger communist generation must build a communist society. You are faced with the task of construction, and you can accomplish that task only by assimilating all modern knowledge, only if you are able to transform communism from cut-and-dried and memorised formulas, counsels, recipes, prescriptions and programmes into that living reality which gives unity to your immediate work, and

only if you are able to make communism a guide in all your practical work.

That is the task you should pursue in educating, training and rousing the entire younger generation. You must be foremost among the millions of builders of a communist society in whose ranks every young man and young woman should be. You will not build a communist society unless you enlist the mass of young workers and peasants in the work of building communism.

This naturally brings me to the question of how we should teach communism and what the specific features of our methods should be.

I first of all shall deal here with the question of communist ethics.

You must train yourselves to be Communists. It is the task of the Youth League to organise its practical activities in such a way that, by learning, organising, uniting and fighting, its members shall train both themselves and all those who look to it for leadership; it should train Communists. The entire purpose of training, educating and teaching the youth of today should be to imbue them with communist ethics.

But is there such a thing as communist ethics? Is there such a thing as communist morality? Of course, there is. It is often suggested that we have no ethics of our own; very often the bourgeoisie accuse us Communists of rejecting all morality. This is a method of confusing the issue, of throwing dust in the eyes of the workers and peasants.

In what sense do we reject ethics, reject morality?

In the sense given to it by the bourgeoisie, who based ethics on God's commandments. On this point we, of course, say that we do not believe in God, and that we know perfectly well that the clergy, the landowners and the bourgeoisie invoked the name of God so as to further their own interests as exploiters. Or, instead of basing ethics on the commandments of morality, on the commandments of God, they based it on idealist or semi-idealist phrases, which always amounted to something very similar to God's commandments.

We reject any morality based on extra-human and extra-class concepts. We say that this is deception, dupery, stultification of the workers and peasants in the interests of the landowners and capitalists.

We say that our morality is entirely subordinated to the interests of the proletariat's class struggle. Our morality stems from the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat.

The old society was based on the oppression of all the workers and peasants by the landowners and capitalists. We had to destroy all that, and overthrow them but to do that we had to create unity. That is something that God cannot create.

This unity could be provided only by the factories, only by a proletariat trained and roused from its long slumber. Only when that class was formed did a mass movement arise which has led to what we have now—the victory of the proletarian revolution in one of the weakest of countries, which for three years has been repelling the onslaught of the bourgeoisie of the

whole world We can see how the proletarian revolution is developing all over the world. On the basis of experience, we now say that only the proletariat could have created the solid force which the disunited and scattered peasantry are following and which has withstood all onslaughts by the exploiters. Only this class can help the working masses unite, rally their ranks and conclusively defend, conclusively consolidate and conclusively build up a communist society.

That is why we say that to us there is no such thing as a morality that stands outside human society; that is a fraud. To us morality is subordinated to the interests of the proletariat's class struggle.

What does that class struggle consist in? It consists in overthrowing the tsar, overthrowing the capitalists, and abolishing the capitalist class.

What are classes in general? Classes are that which permits one section of society to appropriate the labour of another section. If one section of society appropriates all the land, we have a landowner class and a peasant class. If one section of society owns the factories, shares and capital, while another section works in these factories, we have a capitalist class and a proletarian class.

It was not difficult to drive out the tsar—that required only a few days. It was not very difficult to drive out the landowners—that was done in a few months. Nor was it very difficult to drive out the capitalists But it is incomparably more difficult to abolish classes; we still have

the division into workers and peasants. If the peasant is installed on his plot of land and appropriates his surplus grain, that is, grain that he does not need for himself or for his cattle, while the rest of the people have to go without bread, then the peasant becomes an exploiter. The more grain he clings to, the more profitable he finds it; as for the rest, let them starve. "The more they starve, the dearer I can sell this grain." All should work according to a single common plan, on common land, in common factories and in accordance with a common system. Is that easy to attain? You see that it is not as easy as driving out the tsar, the landowners and the capitalists. What is required is that the proletariat re-educate a section of the peasantry; it must win over the working peasants in order to crush the resistance of those peasants who are rich and are profiting from the poverty and want of the rest. Hence the task of the proletarian struggle is not quite completed after we have overthrown the tsar and driven out the landowners and capitalists; to accomplish that is the task of the system we call the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The class struggle is continuing; it has merely changed its forms. It is the class struggle of the proletariat to prevent the return of the old exploiters, to unite in a single union the scattered masses of unenlightened peasants. The class struggle is continuing and it is our task to subordinate all interests to that struggle. Our communist morality is also subordinated to that task. We say: morality is what serves to destroy the old exploiting society and to unite all the

working people around the proletariat, which is building up a new, a communist society.

Communist morality is that which serves this struggle and unites the working people against all exploitation, against all petty private property; for petty property puts into the hands of one person that which has been created by the labour of the whole of society. In our country the land is common property.

But suppose I take a piece of this common property and grow on it twice as much grain as I need, and profiteer on the surplus? Suppose I argue that the more starving people there are, the more they will pay? Would I then be behaving like a Communist? No, I would be behaving like an exploiter, like a proprietor. That must be combated. If that is allowed to go on, things will revert to the rule of the capitalists, to the rule of the bourgeoisie, as has more than once happened in previous revolutions. To prevent the restoration of the rule of the capitalists and the bourgeoisie, we must not allow profiteering; we must not allow individuals to enrich themselves at the expense of the rest; the working people must unite with the proletariat and form a communist society. This is the principal feature of the fundamental task of the League and the organisation of the communist youth.

The old society was based on the principle: rob or be robbed; work for others or make others work for you; be a slave-owner or a slave. Naturally, people brought up in such a society assimilate with their mother's milk, one might say, the psychology, the habit, the concept which says: you are either a slave-owner

or a slave, or else, a small owner, a petty employee, a petty official, or an intellectual—in short, a man who is concerned only with himself, and does not care a rap for anybody else.

If I work this plot of land, I do not care a rap for anybody else; if others starve, all the better, I shall get the more for my grain. If I have a job as a doctor, engineer, teacher, or clerk, I do not care a rap for anybody else. If I toady to and please the powers that be, I may be able to keep my job, and even get on in life and become a bourgeois. A Communist cannot harbour such a psychology and such sentiments. When the workers and peasants proved that they were able, by their own efforts, to defend themselves and create a new society—that was the beginning of the new and communist education, education in the struggle against the exploiters, education in alliance with the proletariat against the self-seekers and petty proprietors, against the psychology and habits which say: I seek my own profit and don't care a rap for anything else.

That is the reply to the question of how the young and rising generation should learn communism.

It can learn communism only by linking up every step in its studies, training and education with the continuous struggle the proletarians and the working people are waging against the old society of exploiters. When people tell us about morality, we say: to a Communist all morality lies in this united discipline and conscious mass struggle against the exploiters. We do not believe in an eternal morality, and we

expose the falseness of all the fables about morality. Morality serves the purpose of helping human society rise to a higher level and rid itself of the exploitation of labour.

To achieve this we need that generation of young people who began to reach political maturity in the midst of a disciplined and desperate struggle against the bourgeoisie. In this struggle that generation is training genuine Communists; it must subordinate to this struggle, and link up with it, each step in its studies, education and training. The education of the communist youth must consist, not in giving them suave talks and moral precepts. This is not what education consists in. When people have seen the way in which their fathers and mothers lived under the yoke of the landowners and capitalists; when they have themselves experienced the sufferings of those who began the struggle against the exploiters; when they have seen the sacrifices made to keep what has been won, and seen what deadly enemies the landowners and capitalists are—they are taught by these conditions to become Communists. Communist morality is based on the struggle for the consolidation and completion of communism. That is also the basis of communist training, education, and teaching. That is the reply to the question of how communism should be learnt.

We could not believe in teaching, training and education if they were restricted only to the schoolroom and divorced from the ferment of life. As long as the workers and peasants are oppressed by the landowners and capitalists, and as long as the schools are controlled by the

landowners and capitalists, the young generation will remain blind and ignorant. Our schools must provide the youth with the fundamentals of knowledge, the ability to evolve communist views independently; they must make educated people of the youth. While they are attending school, they must learn to become participants in the struggle for emancipation from the exploiters. The Young Communist League will justify its name as the League of the young communist generation only when every step in its teaching, training and education is linked up with participation in the common struggle of all working people against the exploiters. You are well aware that, as long as Russia remains the only workers' republic and the old, bourgeois system exists in the rest of the world, we shall be weaker than they are, and be constantly threatened with a new attack, and that only if we learn to be solidly united shall we win in the further struggle and—having gained strength—become really invincible. Thus, to be a Communist means that you must organise and unite the entire young generation and set an example of training and discipline in this struggle. Then you will be able to start building the edifice of communist society and bring it to completion.

To make this clearer to you, I shall quote an example. We call ourselves Communists. What is a Communist? Communist is a Latin word. *Communis* is the Latin for "common". Communist society is a society in which all things—the land, the factories—are owned in common and the people work in common. That is communism.

Is it possible to work in common if each one works separately on his own plot of land? Work in common cannot be brought about all at once. That is impossible. It does not drop from the skies. It comes through toil and suffering; it is created in the course of struggle. The old books are of no use here; no one will believe them. One's own experience of life is needed. When Kolchak and Denikin were advancing from Siberia and the South, the peasants were on their side. They did not like Bolshevism because the Bolsheviks took their grain at a fixed price. But when the peasants in Siberia and the Ukraine experienced the rule of Kolchak and Denikin, they realised that they had only one alternative: either to go to the capitalists, who would at once hand them over into slavery under the landowners; or to follow the workers, who, it is true, did not promise a land flowing with milk and honey, and demanded iron discipline and firmness in an arduous struggle, but would lead them out of enslavement by the capitalists and landowners. When even the ignorant peasants saw and realised this from their own experience, they became conscious adherents of communism, who had gone through a severe school. It is such experience that must form the basis of all the activities of the Young Communist League.

I have replied to the questions of what we must learn, what we must take from the old schools and from the old science. I shall now try to answer the question of how this must be learnt. The answer is: only by inseparably linking each step in the activities of the schools,

each step in training, education and teaching, with the struggle of all the working people against the exploiters.

I shall quote a few examples from the experience of the work of some of the youth organisations so as to illustrate how this training in communism should proceed. Everybody is talking about abolishing illiteracy. You know that a communist society cannot be built in an illiterate country. It is not enough for the Soviet government to issue an order, or for the Party to issue a particular slogan, or to assign a certain number of the best workers to this task. The young generation itself must take up this work. Communism means that the youth, the young men and women who belong to the Youth League, should say: this is our job; we shall unite and go into the rural districts to abolish illiteracy, so that there shall be no illiterates among our young people. We are trying to get the rising generation to devote their activities to this work. You know that we cannot rapidly transform an ignorant and illiterate Russia into a literate country. But if the Youth League sets to work on the job, and if all young people work for the benefit of all, the League, with a membership of 400,000 young men and women, will be entitled to call itself a Young Communist League. It is also a task of the League, not only to acquire knowledge itself, but to help those young people who are unable to extricate themselves by their own efforts from the toils of illiteracy. Being a member of the Youth League means devoting one's labour and efforts to the common cause.

That is what a communist education means. Only in the course of such work do young men and women become real Communists. Only if they achieve practical results in this work will they become Communists.

Take, for example, work in the suburban vegetable gardens. Is that not a real job of work? It is one of the tasks of the Young Communist League. People are starving; there is hunger in the factories. To save ourselves from starvation, vegetable gardens must be developed. But farming is being carried on in the old way. Therefore, more class-conscious elements should engage in this work, and then you will find that the number of vegetable gardens will increase, their acreage will grow, and the results will improve. The Young Communist League must take an active part in this work. Every League and League branch should regard this as its duty.

The Young Communist League must be a shock force, helping in every job and displaying initiative and enterprise. The League should be an organisation enabling any worker to see that it consists of people whose teachings he perhaps does not understand, and whose teachings he may not immediately believe, but from whose practical work and activity he can see that they are really people who are showing him the right road.

If the Young Communist League fails to organise its work in this way in all fields, it will mean that it is reverting to the old bourgeois path. We must combine our education with the struggle of the working people against the

exploiters, so as to help the former accomplish the tasks set by the teachings of communism.

The members of the League should use every spare hour to improve the vegetable gardens, or to organise the education of young people at some factory, and so on. We want to transform Russia from a poverty-stricken and wretched country into one that is wealthy. The Young Communist League must combine its education, learning and training with the labour of the workers and peasants, so as not to confine itself to schools or to reading communist books and pamphlets. Only by working side by side with the workers and peasants can one become a genuine Communist. It has to be generally realised that all members of the Youth League are literate people and at the same time are keen at their jobs. When everyone sees that we have ousted the old drill-ground methods from the old schools and have replaced them with conscious discipline, that all young men and women take part in subbotniks, and utilise every suburban farm to help the population—people will cease to regard labour in the old way.

It is the task of the Young Communist League to organise assistance everywhere, in village or city block, in such matters as—and I shall take a small example—public hygiene or the distribution of food. How was this done in the old, capitalist society? Everybody worked only for himself and nobody cared a straw for the aged and the sick, or whether housework was the concern only of the women, who, in consequence, were in a condition of oppression and servitude. Whose business is it to combat this?

It is the business of the Youth Leagues, which must say: we shall change all this; we shall organise detachments of young people who will help to assure public hygiene or distribute food, who will conduct systematic house-to-house inspections, and work in an organised way for the benefit of the whole of society, distributing their forces properly and demonstrating that labour must be organised.

The generation of people who are now at the age of fifty cannot expect to see a communist society. This generation will be gone before then. But the generation of those who are now fifteen will see a communist society, and will itself build this society. This generation should know that the entire purpose of their lives is to build a communist society. In the old society, each family worked separately and labour was not organised by anybody except the landowners and capitalists, who oppressed the masses of the people. We must organise all labour, no matter how toilsome or messy it may be, in such a way that every worker and peasant will be able to say: I am part of the great army of free labour, and shall be able to build up my life without the landowners and capitalists, able to help establish a communist system. The Young Communist League should teach all young people to engage in conscious and disciplined labour from an early age. In this way we can be confident that the problems now confronting us will be solved. We must assume that no less than ten years will be required for the electrification of the country, so that our impoverished land may profit from the latest

achievements of technology. And so, the generation of those who are now fifteen years old, and will be living in a communist society in ten or twenty years' time, should tackle all its educational tasks in such a way that every day, in every village and city, the young people shall engage in the practical solution of some problem of labour in common, even though the smallest or the simplest. The success of communist construction will be assured when this is done in every village, as communist emulation develops, and the youth prove that they can unite their labour. Only by regarding your every step from the standpoint of the success of that construction, and only by asking ourselves whether we have done all we can to be united and politically-conscious working people will the Young Communist League succeed in uniting its half a million members into a single army of labour and win universal respect. (*Stormy applause.*)

Pravda Nos. 221, 222 and 223, October 5, 6 and 7, 1920

Collected Works, Vol. 31, pp. 283-99

ON PROLETARIAN CULTURE[55]

We see from *Izvestia* of October 8 that, in his address to the Proletcult Congress, Comrade Lunacharsky said things that were *diametrically opposite* to what he and I had agreed upon yesterday.

It is necessary that a draft resolution (of the Proletcult Congress) should be drawn up with the utmost urgency, and that it should be endorsed by the Central Committee, in time to have it put to the vote *at this very* session of the Proletcult. On behalf of the Central Committee it should be submitted not later than today, for endorsement both by the Collegium of the People's Commissariat of Education and by the Proletcult Congress, because the Congress is closing today.

DRAFT RESOLUTION

1) All educational work in the Soviet Republic of workers and peasants, in the field of political education in general and in the field of art in particular, should be imbued with the spirit of the class struggle being waged by the proletariat for the successful achievement of the

aims of its dictatorship, i e , the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the abolition of classes, and the elimination of all forms of exploitation of man by man.

2) Hence, the proletariat, both through its vanguard—the Communist Party—and through the many types of proletarian organisations in general, should display the utmost activity and play the leading part in all the work of public education.

3) All the experience of modern history and, particularly, the more than half-century-old revolutionary struggle of the proletariat of all countries since the appearance of the *Communist Manifesto* has unquestionably demonstrated that the Marxist world outlook is the only true expression of the interests, the viewpoint, and the culture of the revolutionary proletariat

4) Marxism has won its historic significance as the ideology of the revolutionary proletariat because, far from rejecting the most valuable achievements of the bourgeois epoch, it has, on the contrary, assimilated and refashioned everything of value in the more than two thousand years of the development of human thought and culture. Only further work on this basis and in this direction, inspired by the practical experience of the proletarian dictatorship as the final stage in the struggle against every form of exploitation, can be recognised as the development of a genuine proletarian culture.

5) Adhering unswervingly to this stand of principle, the All-Russia Proletcult Congress rejects in the most resolute manner, as theoretically unsound and practically harmful, all

attempts to invent one's own particular brand of culture, to remain isolated in self-contained organisations, to draw a line dividing the field of work of the People's Commissariat of Education and the Proletcult, or to set up a Proletcult "autonomy" within establishments under the People's Commissariat of Education and so forth. On the contrary, the Congress enjoins all Proletcult organisations to fully consider themselves in duty bound to act as auxiliary bodies of the network of establishments under the People's Commissariat of Education, and to accomplish their tasks under the general guidance of the Soviet authorities (specifically, of the People's Commissariat of Education) and of the Russian Communist Party, as part of the tasks of the proletarian dictatorship.

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Comrade Lunacharsky says that his words have been distorted. In that case this resolution is needed *all the more* urgently.

Written on October 8 1920

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Vol 31, pp 316 17

ROUGH DRAFT OF A RESOLUTION ON PROLETARIAN CULTURE[36]

1. Not special ideas but Marxism.

2. Not an *invention* of a new proletarian culture, but the *development* of the best examples, traditions and achievements of the *existing* culture from the *viewpoint* of the world outlook of Marxism and the conditions of the life and struggle of the proletariat in the epoch of its dictatorship.

3. Not in isolation from the People's Commissariat of Education, but as part of it, for the Russian Communist Party + the People's Commissariat of Education=proletarian culture

4. Close connection of the Proletcult with and subordination to the People's Commissariat of Education.

5. In no way. . . .*

Written on October 9, 1920

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* The manuscript breaks off here.—*Ed.*

SPEECH DELIVERED AT AN ALL-RUSSIA CONFERENCE OF POLITICAL EDUCATION WORKERS OF GUBERNIA AND UYEZD EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS

November 3, 1920[57]

Comrades, allow me to speak on several ideas, some of which were dealt with by the Central Committee of the Communist Party and by the Council of People's Commissars in connection with the formation of the Chief Committee for Political Education, while others came to me in connection with the draft submitted to the Council of People's Commissars. This draft was adopted yesterday as a basis; its details have still to be discussed.[58]

I shall permit myself only to say, for my part, that at first I was highly averse to any change in the name of your institution. In my opinion, the function of the People's Commissariat of Education is to help people learn and teach others. My Soviet experience has taught me to regard titles as childish jokes; after all, any title is a joke in its way. Another name has now been endorsed· the Chief Committee for Political Education.

As this matter has already been decided, you must take this as nothing more than a personal remark. If the matter is not limited merely to a change of label, it is only to be welcomed.

If we succeed in drawing new people into cultural and educational work, it will not be just a change of title, and then we can reconcile ourselves to the "Soviet" weakness of sticking a label on every new undertaking and every new institution. If we succeed, we shall have achieved something more than ever before.

The link between education and our policy should be the chief inducement in making people join us in our cultural and educational work. A title may express something if there is a need for it, for along the whole line of our educational work we have to abandon the old standpoint that education should be non-political; we cannot conduct educational work in isolation from politics.

That idea has always predominated in bourgeois society. The very term "apolitical" or "non-political" education is a piece of bourgeois hypocrisy, nothing but humbuggery practised on the masses, 99 per cent of whom are humiliated and degraded by the rule of the church, private property and the like. That, in fact, is the way the bourgeoisie, still in the saddle in all bourgeois countries, is deceiving the masses.

The greater the importance of a political apparatus in such countries, the less its independence of capital and its policy.

In all bourgeois states the connection between the political apparatus and education is very strong, although bourgeois society cannot

frankly acknowledge it. Nevertheless, this society indoctrinates the masses through the church and the institution of private property.

It is one of our basic tasks to contrapose our own truth to bourgeois "truth", and win its recognition.

The transition from bourgeois society to the policy of the proletariat is a very difficult one, all the more so for the bourgeoisie is incessantly slandering us through its entire apparatus of propaganda and agitation. It bends every effort to play down an even more important mission of the dictatorship of the proletariat, its educational mission, which is particularly important in Russia, where the proletariat constitutes a minority of the population. Yet in Russia this mission must be given priority, for we must prepare the masses to build up socialism. The dictatorship of the proletariat would have been out of the question if, in the struggle against the bourgeoisie, the proletariat had not developed a keen class-consciousness, strict discipline and profound devotion, in other words, all the qualities required to assure the proletariat's complete victory over its old enemy.

We do not hold the utopian view that the working masses are ready for a socialist society. From precise facts provided by the entire history of working-class socialism we know that this is not the case, and that preparedness for socialism is created only by large-scale industry, by the strike struggle and by political organisation. To win the victory and accomplish the socialist revolution, the proletariat must be capable of concerted action, of overthrowing

the exploiters. We now see that it has acquired all the necessary qualities, and that it translated them into action when it won power.

Education workers, and the Communist Party as the vanguard in the struggle, should consider it their fundamental task to help enlighten and instruct the working masses, in order to cast off the old ways and habituated routine we have inherited from the old system, the private property habits the masses are thoroughly imbued with. This fundamental task of the entire socialist revolution should never be neglected during consideration of the particular problems that have demanded so much attention from the Party's Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars. What kind of structure should the Chief Committee for Political Education have? How should it be linked up with other institutions? How should it be linked up, not only with the centre but with local bodies? These questions will be answered by comrades who are more competent in the matter, have already gained considerable experience, and have made a special study of the matter. I would like merely to stress the main principles involved. We must put the matter frankly and openly affirm, despite all the old untruths, that education cannot but be linked up with politics.

We are living in an historic period of struggle against the world bourgeoisie, which is far stronger than we are. At this stage of the struggle, we have to safeguard the development of the revolution and combat the bourgeoisie in the military sense and still more by means of our ideology, through education, so that the

habits, usages and convictions acquired by the working class in the course of many decades of struggle for political liberty—the sum total of these habits, usages and ideas—should serve as an instrument for the education of all working people. It is for the proletariat to decide how the latter are to be educated. We must inculcate in the working people the realisation that it is impossible and inexcusable to stand aside in the proletariat's struggle, which is now spreading more and more to all capitalist countries in the world, and to stand aside in international politics. An alliance of all the world's powerful capitalist countries against Soviet Russia—such is the real basis of international politics today. And it must, after all, be realised that on this will depend the fate of hundreds of millions of working people in the capitalist countries. We know that, at the present moment, there is not a corner of the earth which is not under the control of a small group of capitalist countries. Thus the situation is shaping in such a way that one is faced with the alternative of standing aloof from the present struggle and thereby proving one's utter lack of political consciousness, just like those benighted people who have held aloof from the revolution and the war and do not see the bourgeoisie's gross deception of the masses, the deliberate way in which the bourgeoisie is keeping the masses in ignorance; or else of joining the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It is with absolute frankness that we speak of this struggle of the proletariat; each man must choose between joining our side or the

other side. Any attempt to avoid taking sides in this issue must end in fiasco.

Observation of the many remnants of the Kerensky gang, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Social-Democrats, as represented by the Yudeniches, Kolchaks, Petlyuras, Makhnos and others, has shown us such a variety of forms and shades of counter-revolution in various parts of Russia that we have every reason to consider ourselves far more steeled in the struggle than anybody else is. A glance at Western Europe shows the same thing happening there as in our country—a repetition of our own history. Almost everywhere elements similar to the Kerensky gang are to be met alongside the bourgeoisie. They predominate in a number of countries, especially Germany. One can see the same thing everywhere—the impossibility of taking an intermediate position, and a clear realisation that there must be either a white-guard dictatorship (for which the bourgeoisie of all the countries of Western Europe are preparing by arming against us), or the dictatorship of the proletariat. We have experienced this so acutely and profoundly that there is no need for me to talk at length about the Russian Communists. Hence there can be only a single conclusion, one that should be the corner-stone of all arguments and theories about the Chief Committee for Political Education: the primacy of the Communist Party's policy must be frankly recognised in the work of that body. We know of no other form of guidance; and no other has been evolved in any country. Parties may represent the interests of their class in one

degree or another; they may undergo changes or modifications, but we do not yet know of any better form. The entire course of the struggle waged by Soviet Russia, which for three years has withstood the onslaught of world imperialism, is bound up with the fact that the Party has consciously set out to help the proletariat perform its function of educator, organiser and leader, without which the collapse of capitalism is impossible. The working masses, the masses of peasants and workers, must oust the old intellectualist habits and re-educate themselves for the work of building communism. Otherwise the work of construction cannot be undertaken. Our entire experience shows that this is a very serious matter, and we must therefore give prominence to Party primacy and never lose sight of it when discussing our activities and our organisational development. How this is to be done will still have to be discussed at length; it will have to be discussed in the Party's Central Committee and in the Council of People's Commissars. The decree which was endorsed yesterday laid down the fundamentals in respect of the Chief Committee for Political Education, but it has not yet gone through all the stages in the Council of People's Commissars. The decree will be published within the next few days, and you will see that its final form makes no direct mention of relations with the Party.

We must, however, know and remember that, in law and in practice, the Constitution of the Soviet Republic is based on the tenet that the Party rectifies, prescribes and builds according

to a single principle—to enable the communist elements linked with the proletariat to imbue the proletariat with their own spirit, win its adherence, and open its eyes to the bourgeois deceit which we have been trying so long to eliminate. The People's Commissariat of Education has gone through a long struggle; for a long time the teachers' organisation resisted the socialist revolution. Bourgeois prejudices have struck very deep root among the teachers. There has been a long struggle in the form of direct sabotage and of tenacious bourgeois prejudices, and we have to fight for the communist positions slowly, step by step and win them. The Chief Committee for Political Education, which is concerned with extra-mural education, the work of educating and enlightening the masses, is faced with the clear task of combining Party leadership with the effort to gain the adherence of, to imbue with its spirit and to animate with its initiative, this half-million strong army of teachers, this vast institution which is now in the service of the workers. Education workers—the teachers—were trained in the spirit of bourgeois prejudices and habits, in a spirit hostile to the proletariat, with which they have had no ties whatever. We must now train a new army of teachers and instructors who must be in close touch with the Party and its ideas, be imbued with its spirit, and attract the masses of workers, instilling the spirit of communism into them and arousing their interest in what is being done by the Communists.

Since the old customs, habits and ideas must be discarded, the Chief Committee for Political

Education and its personnel are faced with a most important task, which they must keep uppermost in their minds. Here we indeed have a dilemma. how can we establish a link between the teachers, most of whom are of the old school, with Party members, with the Communists? That is an extremely difficult problem, one that will require a considerable amount of thought.

Let us consider the means of establishing organisational links between people who are so different. In principle, we cannot for a moment doubt the need of the Communist Party's primacy. Consequently, the purpose of political culture, of political instruction, is to train genuine Communists capable of stamping out falsehood and prejudices and helping the working masses to vanquish the old system and build up a state without capitalists, without exploiters, and without landowners. How can that be done? Only by acquiring the sum total of knowledge that the teachers have inherited from the bourgeoisie. Without this the technical achievements of communism will be impossible, and all hopes for those achievements would be pipe dreams. So the question arises: how are we to organise these people, who are not used to bringing politics into their work, especially the politics that is to our advantage, i.e., politics essential to communism? That, as I have said, is a very difficult problem. We have discussed the matter in the Central Committee, and in discussing it have tried to take into account the lessons of experience. We think that a congress like the one I am addressing today, a conference like

yours, will be of great value in this respect. Every Party Committee now has to look from a new angle upon every propagandist, who used to be regarded merely as a man belonging to a definite circle, a definite organisation. Each of them belongs to a ruling party which directs the whole state and the Soviet Russia's world struggle against the bourgeois system. He is a representative of a fighting class and of a party which runs, and must run, an enormous machine of state. Many a Communist who has been through the splendid school of underground work and has been tested and steeled in the struggle is unwilling or unable to understand the full significance of this change, of this transition, which turns the agitator and propagandist into a leader of agitators, a leader in a huge political organisation. The kind of title he is given, even if it is an embarrassing one—such as superintendent of general schools—does not matter much; what is important is that he should be capable of directing the mass of teachers.

It should be said that the hundreds of thousands of teachers constitute a body that must get the work moving, stimulate thought, and combat the prejudices that to this day still persist among the masses. The heritage of capitalist culture, the fact that the mass of the teachers are imbued with its defects, which prevent them from being Communists, should not deter us from admitting these teachers into the ranks of the political education workers, for these teachers possess the knowledge without which we cannot achieve our aim.

We must put hundreds of thousands of useful people to work in the service of communist education. That is a task that was accomplished at the front, in our Red Army, into which tens of thousands of representatives of the old army were incorporated. In the lengthy process of re-education, they became welded with the Red Army, as they ultimately proved by their victories. This is an example that we must follow in our cultural and educational work. True, this work is not so spectacular, but it is even more important. We need every agitator and propagandist; he will be doing his job if he works in a strictly Party spirit but at the same time does not limit himself to Party work, and remembers that it is his duty to direct hundreds of thousands of teachers, whet their interest, overcome their old bourgeois prejudices, enlist them in the work we are doing, and make them realise the immensity of our work. It is only by tackling that job that we can lead this mass of people, whom capitalism suppressed and drew away from us, along the right path.

Such are the aims that every agitator and propagandist working in the sphere of extramural education must pursue and constantly keep in sight. A host of practical difficulties will be encountered in the process, and you must help the cause of communism by becoming representatives and leaders, not only of Party study-circles, but of the entire state administration, which is now in the hands of the working class.

We must overcome resistance from the capitalists in all its forms, not only in the military

and the political spheres, but also ideological resistance, which is the most deep-seated and the strongest. It is the duty of our educational workers to accomplish the re-education of the masses. The interest, the thirst for education and knowledge of communism which are to be seen among them are a guarantee of our victory in this field too, although, perhaps, not as rapid as at the front and only after great difficulties and at times even reverses. However, we shall ultimately win.

Last, I should like to dwell on one more point. Perhaps the title of Chief Committee for Political Education is not properly understood. Inasmuch as it makes mention of the political concept, politics is the main thing here.

But how is politics to be understood? If politics is understood in the old sense, one may fall into a grave and profound error. Politics means a struggle between classes; means the relations of the proletariat in its struggle for its emancipation, against the world bourgeoisie. However, in our struggle two aspects of the matter stand out: on the one hand, there is the task of destroying the heritage of the bourgeois system, of foiling the repeated attempts of the whole bourgeoisie to crush the Soviet state. This task has absorbed most of our attention hitherto and has prevented us from proceeding to the other task, that of construction. According to the bourgeois world outlook, politics was divorced, as it were, from economics. The bourgeoisie said: peasants, you must work for your livelihood; workers, you must work to secure your means of subsistence on the market; as for

economic policy, that is the business of your masters. That, however, is not so; politics should be the business of the people, the business of the proletariat. Here we must emphasise the fact that nine-tenths of our time and our work is devoted to the struggle against the bourgeoisie. The victories over Wrangel, of which we read yesterday, and of which you will read today and probably tomorrow, show that one stage of the struggle is coming to an end and that we have secured peace with a number of Western countries; every victory on the war front leaves our hands freer for the internal struggle, for the politics of state organisation. Every step that brings us closer to victory over the whiteguards gradually shifts the focus of the struggle to economic policy. Propaganda of the old type describes and illustrates what communism is. This kind of propaganda is now useless, for we have to show in practice how socialism is to be built. All our propaganda must be based on the political experience of economic development. That is our principal task; whoever interprets it in the old sense will show himself to be a retrograde, one who is incapable of conducting propaganda work among the masses of the peasants and workers. Our main policy must now be to develop the state economically, so as to gather in more poods of grain and mine more poods of coal, to decide how best to utilise these poods of grain and coal and preclude starvation—that is our policy. All our agitation and propaganda must be focussed on this aim. There must be less fine talk, for you cannot satisfy the working people with fine

words. As soon as the war enables us to shift the focus from the struggle against the bourgeoisie, from the struggle against Wrangel and the whiteguards, we shall turn to economic policy. And then agitation and propaganda will play a role of tremendous and ever growing importance.

Every agitator must be a state leader, a leader of all the peasants and workers in the work of economic development. He must tell them what one should know, what pamphlets and books one should read to become a Communist.

That is the way to improve our economic life and make it more secure, more social; that is the way to increase production, improve the food situation and distribution of the goods produced, increase coal output, and restore industry without capitalism and without the capitalist spirit

What does communism consist in? All propaganda for communism must be conducted in a way that will amount to practical guidance of the state's development. Communism must be made comprehensible to the masses of the workers so that they will regard it as their own cause. That task is being poorly accomplished, and thousands of mistakes are being made. We make no secret of the fact. However, the workers and the peasants must themselves build up and improve our apparatus, with our assistance, feeble and inadequate though it is. To us, that is no longer a programme, a theory, or a task to be accomplished; it has become a matter of actual and practical development. Although we suffered some cruel reverses in our war, we have at least learnt from these reverses and

won complete victory. Now, too, we must learn a lesson from every defeat and must remember that the workers and peasants have to be instructed by taking the work already performed as an example. We must point out what is bad, so as to avoid it in future

By taking constructive work as an example, by repeating it time and again, we shall succeed in turning inefficient communist managers into genuine builders, and, in the first place, into builders of our economic life. We shall achieve our targets and overcome all the obstacles which we have inherited from the old system and cannot be eliminated at a single stroke. We must re-educate the masses; they can be re-educated only by agitation and propaganda. The masses must be brought, in the first place, into the work of building the entire economic life. That must be the principal and basic object in the work of each agitator and propagandist, and when he realises this, the success of his work will be assured. (*Loud applause.*)

Bulletin of the All Russia Conference of Political Education Workers (November 1-8, 1920), Moscow

Collected Works, Vol 31, pp 363-73

FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

The fourth anniversary of October 25 (November 7) is approaching.

The farther that great day recedes from us, the more clearly we see the significance of the proletarian revolution in Russia, and the more deeply we reflect upon the practical experience of our work as a whole.

Very briefly and, of course, in very incomplete and rough outline, this significance and experience may be summed up as follows.

The direct and immediate object of the revolution in Russia was a bourgeois-democratic one, namely, to destroy the survivals of medievalism and sweep them away completely, to purge Russia of this barbarism, of this shame, and to remove this immense obstacle to all culture and progress in our country.

And we can justifiably pride ourselves on having carried out that purge with greater determination and much more rapidly, boldly and successfully, and, from the point of view of its effect on the masses, much more widely and deeply, than the great French Revolution over one hundred and twenty-five years ago.

Both the anarchists and the petty-bourgeois democrats (i e., the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who are the Russian counterparts of that international social type) have talked and are still talking an incredible lot of nonsense about the relation between the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the socialist (*that is*, proletarian) revolution. The last four years have proved to the hilt that our interpretation of Marxism on this point, and our estimate of the experience of former revolutions were correct. We have *consummated* the bourgeois-democratic revolution as nobody had done before. We are *advancing* towards the socialist revolution consciously, firmly and unswervingly, knowing that it is not separated from the bourgeois-democratic revolution by a Chinese Wall, and knowing too that (in the last analysis) *struggle alone* will determine how far we shall advance, what part of this immense and lofty task we shall accomplish, and to what extent we shall succeed in consolidating our victories. Time will show. But we see even now that a tremendous amount—tremendous for this ruined, exhausted and backward country—has already been done towards the socialist transformation of society.

Let us, however, finish what we have to say about the bourgeois-democratic content of our revolution. Marxists must understand what that means. To explain, let us take a few striking examples.

The bourgeois-democratic content of the revolution means that the social relations (system,

institutions) of the country are purged of medievalism, serfdom, feudalism.

What were the chief manifestations, survivals, remnants of serfdom in Russia up to 1917? The monarchy, the system of social estates, landed proprietorship and land tenure, the status of women, religion, and national oppression. Take any one of these Augean stables, which, incidentally, were left largely uncleansed by all the more advanced states when they accomplished *their* bourgeois-democratic revolutions one hundred and twenty-five, two hundred and fifty and more years ago (1649 in England); take any of these Augean stables, and you will see that we have cleansed them thoroughly. In a matter of *ten weeks*, from October 25 (November 7), 1917 to January 5, 1918, when the Constituent Assembly[59] was dissolved, we accomplished a thousand times more in this respect than was accomplished by the bourgeois democrats and liberals (the Cadets) and by the petty-bourgeois democrats (the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries) *during the eight months* they were in power.

Those poltroons, gas-bags, vainglorious Narcissuses and petty Hamlets brandished their wooden swords—but did not even destroy the monarchy! We cleansed out all that monarchist muck as nobody had ever done before. We left not a stone, not a brick of that ancient edifice, the social-estate system (even the most advanced countries, such as Britain, France and Germany, have not completely eliminated the survivals of that system to this day!), standing. We tore out the deep-seated roots of the social-

estate system, namely, the remnants of feudalism and serfdom in the system of landownership, to the last. "One may argue" (there are plenty of quill-drivers, Cadets, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries abroad to indulge in such arguments) as to what "in the long run" will be the outcome of the agrarian reform effected by the Great October Revolution. We have no desire at the moment to waste time on such controversies, for we are deciding this, as well as the mass of accompanying controversies, by struggle. But the fact cannot be denied that the petty-bourgeois democrats "compromised" with the landowners, the custodians of the traditions of serfdom, for eight months, while we completely swept the landowners and all their traditions from Russian soil in a few weeks.

Take religion, or the denial of rights to women, or the oppression and inequality of the non-Russian nationalities. These are all problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The vulgar petty-bourgeois democrats talked about them for eight months. In not a *single* one of the most advanced countries in the world have *these* questions been *completely* settled on *bourgeois-democratic* lines In our country they have been settled completely by the legislation of the October Revolution. We have fought and are fighting religion in earnest. We have granted *all* the non-Russian nationalities *their own* republics or autonomous regions. We in Russia no longer have the base, mean and infamous denial of rights to women or inequality of the sexes, that disgusting survival of feudalism and medievalism which is being renovated by the

avaricious bourgeoisie and the dull-witted and frightened petty bourgeoisie in every other country in the world without exception.

All this goes to make up the content of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. A hundred and fifty and two hundred and fifty years ago the progressive leaders of that revolution (or of those revolutions, if we consider each national variety of the one general type) promised to rid mankind of medieval privileges, of sex inequality, of state privileges for one religion or another (or "religious *ideas*", "the church" in general), and of national inequality. They promised, but did not keep their promises. They could not keep them, for they were hindered by their "respect"—for the "sacred right of private property". Our proletarian revolution was not afflicted with this accursed "respect" for this thrice-accursed medievalism and for the "sacred right of private property".

But in order to consolidate the achievements of the bourgeois-democratic revolution for the peoples of Russia, we were obliged to go farther; and we did go farther. We solved the problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in passing, as a "by-product" of our main and genuinely *proletarian*-revolutionary, socialist activities. We have always said that reforms are a by-product of the revolutionary class struggle. We said—and proved it by deeds—that bourgeois-democratic reforms are a by-product of the proletarian, i.e., of the socialist revolution. Incidentally, the Kautskys, Hilferdings, Martovs, Chernovs, Hillquits, Longuets, MacDonalds, Turatis and other heroes of "Two-and-a-Half"[60]

Marxism were incapable of understanding *this* relation between the bourgeois-democratic and the proletarian-socialist revolutions. The first develops into the second The second, in passing, solves the problems of the first. The second consolidates the work of the first Struggle, and struggle alone, decides how far the second succeeds in outgrowing the first.

The Soviet system is one of the most vivid proofs, or manifestations, of how the one revolution develops into the other. The Soviet system provides the maximum of democracy for the workers and peasants; at the same time, it marks a break with *bourgeois* democracy and the rise of a *new,* epoch-making *type* of democracy, namely, proletarian democracy, or the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Let the curs and swine of the moribund bourgeoisie and of the petty-bourgeois democrats who trail behind them heap imprecations, abuse and derision upon our heads for our reverses and mistakes in the work of building up *our* Soviet system. We do not forget for a moment that we have committed and are committing numerous mistakes and are suffering numerous reverses. How can reverses and mistakes be avoided in a matter so new in the history of the world as the building of an unprecendented *type* of state edifice! We shall work steadfastly to set our reverses and mistakes right and to improve our practical application of Soviet principles, which is still very, very far from being perfect. But we have a right to be and are proud that to us has fallen the good fortune to *begin* the building of a Soviet state, and thereby

to *usher in* a new era in world history, the era of the rule of a *new* class, a class which is oppressed in every capitalist country, but which everywhere is marching forward towards a new life, towards victory over the bourgeoisie, towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, towards the emancipation of mankind from the yoke of capital and from imperialist wars.

The question of imperialist wars, of the international policy of finance capital which now dominates the whole world, a policy that must *inevitably* engender new imperialist wars, that must inevitably cause an extreme intensification of national oppression, pillage, brigandry and the strangulation of weak, backward and small nationalities by a handful of "advanced" powers—that question has been the keystone of all policy in all the countries of the globe since 1914. It is a question of life and death for millions upon millions of people. It is a question of whether 20,000,000 people (as compared with the 10,000,000 who were killed in the war of 1914-18 and in the supplementary "minor" wars that are still going on) are to be slaughtered in the next imperialist war, which the bourgeoisie are preparing, and which is growing out of capitalism before our very eyes. It is a question of whether in that future war, which is inevitable (if capitalism continues to exist), 60,000,000 people are to be maimed (compared with the 30,000,000 maimed in 1914-18). In this question, too, our October Revolution marked the beginning of a new era in world history. The lackeys of the bourgeoisie and its yes-men—the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, and the

petty-bourgeois, allegedly "socialist", democrats all over the world—derided our slogan "convert the imperialist war into a civil war". But that slogan proved to be the *truth*—it was the only truth, unpleasant, blunt, naked and brutal, but nevertheless the *truth*, as against the host of most refined jingoist and pacifist lies. Those lies are being dispelled. The Brest peace has been exposed. And with every passing day the significance and consequences of a peace that is even worse than the Brest peace—the peace of Versailles—are being more relentlessly exposed. And the millions who are thinking about the causes of the recent war and of the approaching future war are more and more clearly realising the grim and inexorable truth that it is impossible to escape imperialist war, and imperialist peace (if the old orthography were still in use, I would have written the word *mir* in two ways, to give it both its meanings)* which inevitably engenders imperialist war, that it is impossible to escape that inferno, *except by a Bolshevik struggle and a Bolshevik revolution.*

Let the bourgeoisie and the pacifists, the generals and the petty bourgeoisie, the capitalists and the philistines, the pious Christians and the knights of the Second[61] and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals vent their fury against that revolution. No torrents of abuse, calumnies and lies can enable them to conceal the historic fact that for the first time in hundreds and thousands

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* In Russian, the word *mir* has two meanings (*world* and *peace*) and had two different spellings in the old orthography —*Tr.*

of years the slaves have replied to a war between slave-owners by openly proclaiming the slogan "Convert this war between slave owners for the division of their loot into a war of the slaves of all nations against the slave-owners of all nations."

For the first time in hundreds and thousands of years that slogan has grown from a vague and helpless waiting into a clear and definite political programme, into an effective struggle waged by millions of oppressed people under the leadership of the proletariat; it has grown into the first victory of the proletariat, the first victory in the struggle to abolish war and to unite the workers of all countries against the united bourgeoisie of different nations, against the bourgeoisie that makes peace and war at the expense of the slaves of capital, the wage-workers, the peasants, the working people.

This first victory is *not yet the final victory*, and it was achieved by our October Revolution at the price of incredible difficulties and hardships, at the price of unprecedented suffering, accompanied by a series of serious reverses and mistakes on our part. How could a single backward people be expected to frustrate the imperialist wars of the most powerful and most developed countries of the world without sustaining reverses and without committing mistakes! We are not afraid to admit our mistakes and shall examine them dispassionately in order to learn how to correct them. But the fact remains that for the first time in hundreds and thousands of years the promise "to reply" to war between the slave-owners by a revolution

of the slaves directed *against* all the slave-owners *has been completely fulfilled*—and is being fulfilled despite all difficulties.

We have made the start. When, at what date and time, and the proletarians of which nation will complete this process is not important. The important thing is that the ice has been broken; the road is open, the way has been shown.

Gentlemen, capitalists of all countries, keep up your hypocritical pretence of "defending the fatherland"—the Japanese fatherland against the American, the American against the Japanese, the French against the British, and so forth! Gentlemen, knights of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals, pacifist petty bourgeoisie and philistines of the entire world, go on "evading" the question of how to combat imperialist wars by issuing new "Basle Manifestos" (on the model of the Basle Manifesto of 1912). *The first Bolshevik revolution* has wrested *the first hundred million people* of this earth from the clutches of imperialist war and the imperialist world. Subsequent revolutions will deliver the rest of mankind from such wars and from such a world.

Our last, but most important and most difficult task, the one we have done least about, is economic development, the laying of economic foundations for the new, socialist edifice on the site of the demolished feudal edifice and the semi-demolished capitalist edifice. It is in this most important and most difficult task that we have sustained the greatest number of reverses and have made most mistakes. How could anyone expect that a task so new to the world

could be begun without reverses and without mistakes! But we have begun it We shall continue it. At this very moment we are, by our New Economic Policy,[62] correcting a number of our mistakes. We are learning how to continue erecting the socialist edifice in a small-peasant country without committing such mistakes.

The difficulties are immense. But we are accustomed to grappling with immense difficulties. Not for nothing do our enemies call us "stone-hard" and exponents of a "firm-line policy". But we have also learned, at least to some extent, another art that is essential in revolution, namely, flexibility, the ability to effect swift and sudden changes of tactics if changes in objective conditions demand them, and to choose another path for the achievement of our goal if the former path proves to be inexpedient or impossible at the given moment

Borne along on the crest of the wave of enthusiasm, rousing first the political enthusiasm and then the military enthusiasm of the people, we expected to accomplish economic tasks just as great as the political and military tasks we had accomplished by relying directly on this enthusiasm. We expected—or perhaps it would be truer to say that we presumed without having given it adequate consideration—to be able to organise the state production and the state distribution of products on communist lines in a small-peasant country directly as ordered by the proletarian state. Experience has proved that we were wrong. It appears that a number of transitional stages were necessary—

state capitalism and socialism—in order to *prepare*—to prepare by many years of effort—for the transition to communism. Not directly relying on enthusiasm, but aided by the enthusiasm engendered by the great revolution, and on the basis of personal interest, personal incentive and business principles, we must first set to work in this small-peasant country to build solid gangways to socialism by way of state capitalism. Otherwise we shall never get to communism, we shall never bring scores of millions of people to communism. That is what experience, the objective course of the development of the revolution, has taught us.

And we, who during these three or four years have learned a little to make abrupt changes of front (when abrupt changes of front are needed), have begun zealously, attentively and sedulously (although still not zealously, attentively and sedulously enough) to learn to make a new change of front, namely, the New Economic Policy. The proletarian state must become a cautious, assiduous and shrewd "businessman", a punctilious *wholesale merchant*—otherwise it will never succeed in putting this small-peasant country economically on its feet. Under existing conditions, living as we are side by side with the capitalist (for the time being capitalist) West, there is no other way of progressing to communism. A wholesale merchant seems to be an economic type as remote from communism as heaven from earth. But that is one of the contradictions which, in actual life, lead from a small-peasant economy via state capitalism to socialism. Personal incentive will step up

production; we must increase production first and foremost and at all costs. Wholesale trade economically unites millions of small peasants it gives them a personal incentive, links them up and leads them to the next step, namely, to various forms of association and alliance in the process of production itself. We have already started the necessary changes in our economic policy and already have some successes to our credit; true, they are small and partial, but nonetheless they are successes In this new field of "tuition" we are already finishing our preparatory class. By persistent and assiduous study, by making practical experience the test of every step we take, by not fearing to alter over and over again what we have already begun, by correcting our mistakes and most carefully analysing their significance, we shall pass to the higher classes. We shall go through the whole "course", although the present state of world economics and world politics has made that course much longer and much more difficult than we would have liked No matter at what cost, no matter how severe the hardships of the transition period may be—despite disaster, famine and ruin—we shall not flinch, we shall triumphantly carry our cause to its goal

October 14, 1921

Pravda No 234
October 18, 1921
Signed N *Lenin*

Collected Works
Vol 33, pp 51 59

From THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY AND THE TASKS OF THE POLITICAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS

REPORT TO THE SECOND ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF POLITICAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS

October 17, 1921

What talk can there be of a new policy? God grant that we manage to stick to the old policy if we have to resort to extraordinary measures to abolish illiteracy. That is obvious. But it is still more obvious that in the military and other fields we performed miracles. The greatest miracle of all, in my opinion, would be if the Commission for the Abolition of Illiteracy were completely abolished, and if no proposals, such as I have heard here, were made for separating it from the People's Commissariat of Education. If that is true, and if you give it some thought, you will agree with me that an extraordinary commission should be set up to abolish certain bad proposals.

More than that—it is not enough to abolish illiteracy, it is necessary to build up Soviet economy, and for that literacy alone will not carry us very far. We must raise culture to a much

higher level. A man must make use of his ability to read and write; he must have something to read, he must have newspapers and propaganda pamphlets, which should be properly distributed and reach the people and not get lost in transit, as they do now, so that no more than half of them are read, and the rest are used in offices for some purpose or other. Perhaps not even one-fourth reach the people. We must learn to make full use of the scanty resources we do possess.

That is why we must, in connection with the New Economic Policy, ceaselessly propagate the idea that political education calls for raising the level of culture at all costs The ability to read and write must be made to serve the purpose of raising the cultural level; the peasants must be able to use the ability to read and write for the improvement of their farms and their state.

Second All Russia Congress of Political Education Departments. Bulletin of the Congress No 2, October 19, 1921

Collected Works Vol 33, pp 74-75

NOTES FOR A REPORT AT THE SECOND ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF POLITICAL EDUCATION WORKERS

THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY AND THE TASKS OF POLITICAL EDUCATION WORKERS

1. Not in the straightforward communist fashion, but "by outflanking and with a special approach".

2. Defeat and retreat—for a new advance.

3. Who will be able to take advantage sooner, the capitalists or ourselves?

4. "Personal incentives".... Peasants, workers, experts, a mass of stupidities in our attitude to the latter.

5. *To learn* from capitalists and lessees.
A serious and *harsh* schooling.

6. *Increase in production* at all costs.

> You are outside the institutions? It is even better that you are outside.

7. *Literacy.* Liquidation of illiteracy, and not in the clouds and liquidating the Commission for Abolition. July 19, 1920.

A disgraceful list of gubernias and uyezds lagging in respect of literacy

8 *Raising of cultural level*

(after every great political upheaval, a long time goes into "digestion", "assimilation", training to make use, finishing the rough-hewn work of initial construction)

9. Improvement of legality . . . teach people to struggle *in a civilised way* for legality, without at all forgetting the limits of legality in a revolution. That's not the evil *now*, it's the *multitude* of illegalities.

10. In particular, *graft*. Who has done what to fight graft.

10 bis. Bureaucracy and red tape

11. Production propaganda, bringing to the fore economic successes *possible* here and now for the peasant, ability to single out, use for propaganda, *follow up* success

12. *Practical successes in the building* of the economy—that is the point. The touchstone of everything

Four commandments

13 ΣΣ

Three enemies: Communist *conceit*—this is the enemy

(1) Don't split hairs, don't be pompous in your communism, don't use great words to cover up your slackness, idleness, apathy, backwardness;

Illiteracy

(2) Wipe out illiteracy;

Graft

ΣΣ

{ (3) Fight graft;
(4) Check all your work, so that words should not remain words, by *practical* successes in economic construction.

Written before October 17, 1921

First published in 1924 in the magazine *Molodaya Gvardia* No. 2-3

Collected Works, Vol. 36, pp. 549-50

ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MILITANT MATERIALISM

Comrade Trotsky has already said everything necessary, and said it very well, about the general purposes of *Pod Znamenem Marksizma*[63] in issue No. 1-2 of that journal. I should like to deal with certain questions that more closely define the content and programme of the work which its editors have set forth in the introductory statement in this issue.

This statement says that not all those gathered round the journal *Pod Znamenem Marksizma* are Communists but that they are all consistent materialists. I think that this alliance of Communists and non-Communists is absolutely essential and correctly defines the purposes of the journal. One of the biggest and most dangerous mistakes made by Communists (as generally by revolutionaries who have successfully accomplished the beginning of a great revolution) is the idea that a revolution can be made by revolutionaries alone. On the contrary, to be successful, all serious revolutionary work requires that the idea that revolutionaries are capable of playing the part only of the vanguard of the truly virile and advanced class must be understood and translated into action. A vanguard

performs its tasks as vanguard only when it is able to avoid being isolated from the mass of the people it leads and is able really to lead the whole mass forward. Without an alliance with non-Communists in the most diverse spheres of activity there can be no question of any successful communist construction.

This also applies to the defence of materialism and Marxism, which has been undertaken by *Pod Znamenem Marksizma*. Fortunately, the main trends of advanced social thinking in Russia have a solid materialist tradition. Apart from G. V. Plekhanov, it will be enough to mention Chernyshevsky, from whom the modern Narodniks (the Popular Socialists, Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc.) have frequently retreated in quest of fashionable reactionary philosophical doctrines, captivated by the tinsel of the so-called last word in European science, and unable to discern beneath this tinsel some variety of servility to the bourgeoisie, to bourgeois prejudice and bourgeois reaction.

At any rate, in Russia we still have—and shall undoubtedly have for a fairly long time to come—materialists from the non-communist camp, and it is our absolute duty to enlist all adherents of consistent and militant materialism in the joint work of combating philosophical reaction and the philosophical prejudices of so-called educated society. Dietzgen senior—not to be confused with his writer son, who was as pretentious as he was unsuccessful—correctly, aptly and clearly expressed the fundamental Marxist view of the philosophical trends which prevail in bourgeois countries and enjoy the

regard of their scientists and publicists, when he said that in effect the professors of philosophy in modern society are in the majority of cases nothing but "graduated flunkeys of clericalism".

Our Russian intellectuals, who, like their brethren in all other countries, are fond of thinking themselves advanced, are very much averse to shifting the question to the level of the opinion expressed in Dietzgen's words. But they are averse to it because they cannot look the truth in the face. One has only to give a little thought to the governmental and also the general economic, social and every other kind of dependence of modern educated people on the ruling bourgeoisie to realise that Dietzgen's scathing description was absolutely true. One has only to recall the vast majority of the fashionable philosophical trends that arise so frequently in European countries, beginning for example with those connected with the discovery of radium and ending with those which are now seeking to clutch at the skirts of Einstein, to gain an idea of the connection between the class interests and the class position of the bourgeoisie and its support of all forms of religion on the one hand, and the ideological content of the fashionable philosophical trends on the other.

It will be seen from the above that a journal that sets out to be a militant materialist organ must be primarily a militant organ, in the sense of unflinchingly exposing and indicting all modern "graduated flunkeys of clericalism", irrespective of whether they act as representatives

of official science or as free lances calling themselves "democratic Left or ideologically socialist" publicists.

In the second place, such a journal must be a militant atheist organ. We have departments, or at least state institutions, which are in charge of this work. But the work is being carried on with extreme apathy and very unsatisfactorily, and is apparently suffering from the general conditions of our truly Russian (even though Soviet) bureaucratic ways. It is therefore highly essential that in addition to the work of these state institutions, and in order to improve and infuse life into that work, a journal which sets out to propagandise militant materialism must carry on untiring atheist propaganda and an untiring atheist fight. The literature on the subject in all languages should be carefully followed and everything at all valuable in this sphere should be translated, or at least reviewed.

Engels long ago advised the contemporary leaders of the proletariat to translate the militant atheist literature of the late eighteenth century[64] for mass distribution among the people. We have not done this up to the present, to our shame be it said (this is one of the numerous proofs that it is much easier to seize power in a revolutionary epoch than to know how to use this power properly). Our apathy, inactivity and incompetence are sometimes excused on all sorts of "lofty" grounds, as, for example, that the old atheist literature of the eighteenth century is antiquated, unscientific, naïve, etc. There is nothing worse than such pseudo-scientific

sophistry, which serves as a screen either for pedantry or for a complete misunderstanding of Marxism. There is, of course, much that is unscientific and naïve in the atheist writings of the eighteenth-century revolutionaries. But nobody prevents the publishers of these writings from abridging them and providing them with brief postscripts pointing out the progress made by mankind in the scientific criticism of religions since the end of the eighteenth century, mentioning the latest writings on the subject, and so forth. It would be the biggest and most grievous mistake a Marxist could make to think that the millions of the people (especially the peasants and artisans), who have been condemned by all modern society to darkness, ignorance and superstition, can extricate themselves from this darkness only along the straight line of a purely Marxist education. These masses should be supplied with the most varied atheist propaganda material, they should be made familiar with facts from the most diverse spheres of life, they should be approached in every possible way, so as to interest them, rouse them from their religious torpor, stir them from the most varied angles and by the most varied methods, and so forth.

The keen, vivacious and talented writings of the old eighteenth-century atheists wittily and openly attacked the prevailing clericalism and will very often prove a thousand times more suitable for arousing people from their religious torpor than the dull and dry paraphrases of Marxism, almost completely unillustrated by skilfully selected facts, which predominate in

our literature and which (it is no use hiding the fact) frequently distort Marxism. We have translations of all the major works of Marx and Engels. There are absolutely no grounds for fearing that the old atheism and old materialism will remain unsupplemented by the corrections introduced by Marx and Engels. The most important thing—and it is this that is most frequently overlooked by those of our Communists who are supposedly Marxists, but who in fact mutilate Marxism—is to know how to awaken in the still undeveloped masses an intelligent attitude towards religious questions and an intelligent criticism of religions.

On the other hand, take a glance at modern scientific critics of religion. These educated bourgeois writers almost invariably "supplement" their own refutations of religious superstitions with arguments which immediately expose them as ideological slaves of the bourgeoisie, as "graduated flunkeys of clericalism".

Two examples. Professor R. Y. Wipper published in 1918 a little book entitled *Voznikno-venie Khristianstva* (The Origin of Christianity —Pharos Publishing House, Moscow). In his account of the principal results of modern science, the author not only refrains from combating the superstitions and deception which are the weapons of the church as a political organisation, not only evades these questions, but makes the simply ridiculous and most reactionary claim that he is above both "extremes"—the idealist and the materialist. This is toadying to the ruling bourgeoisie, which all over the world devotes to the support of religion hundreds of millions

of rubles from the profits squeezed out of the working people.

The well-known German scientist, Arthur Drews, while refuting religious superstitions and fables in his book, *Die Christusmythe* (The Christ Myth), and while showing that Christ never existed, at the end of the book declares in favour of religion, albeit a renovated, purified and more subtle religion, one that would be capable of withstanding "the daily growing naturalist torrent" (fourth German edition, 1910, p. 238). Here we have an outspoken and deliberate reactionary, who is openly helping the exploiters to replace the old, decayed religious superstitions by new, more odious and vile superstitions.

This does not mean that Drews should not be translated. It means that while in a certain measure effecting an alliance with the progressive section of the bourgeoisie, Communists and all consistent materialists should unflinchingly expose that section when it is guilty of reaction. It means that to shun an alliance with the representatives of the bourgeoisie of the eighteenth century, i.e., the period when it was revolutionary, would be to betray Marxism and materialism; for an "alliance" with the Drewses, in one form or another and in one degree or another, is essential for our struggle against the predominating religious obscurantists.

Pod Znamenem Marksizma, which sets out to be an organ of militant materialism, should devote much of its space to atheist propaganda, to reviews of the literature on the subject and to correcting the immense shortcomings of our

governmental work in this field It is particularly important to utilise books and pamphlets which contain many concrete facts and comparisons showing how the class interests and class organisations of the modern bourgeoisie are connected with the organisations of religious institutions and religious propaganda.

All material relating to the United States of America, where the official, state connection between religion and capital is less manifest, is extremely important. But, on the other hand, it becomes all the clearer to us that so-called modern democracy (which the Mensheviks, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, partly also the anarchists, etc , so unreasonably worship) is nothing but the freedom to preach whatever is to the advantage of the bourgeoisie, to preach, namely, the most reactionary ideas, religion, obscurantism, defence of the exploiters, etc

One would like to hope that a journal which sets out to be a militant materialist organ will provide our reading public with reviews of atheist literature, showing for which circle of readers any particular writing might be suitable and in what respect, and mentioning what literature has been published in our country (only decent translations should be given notice, and they are not so many), and what is still to be published

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// In addition to the alliance with consistent materialists who do not belong to the Communist Party, of no less and perhaps even of more importance for the work which militant materialism should perform is an alliance with those

modern natural scientists who incline towards materialism and are not afraid to defend and preach it as against the modish philosophical wanderings into idealism and scepticism which are prevalent in so-called educated society.

The article by A. Timiryazev on Einstein's theory of relativity published in *Pod Znamenem Marksizma* No. 1-2 permits us to hope that the journal will succeed in effecting this second alliance too. Greater attention should be paid to it. It should be remembered that the sharp upheaval which modern natural science is undergoing very often gives rise to reactionary philosophical schools and minor schools, trends and minor trends. Unless, therefore, the problems raised by the recent revolution in natural science are followed, and unless natural scientists are enlisted in the work of a philosophical journal, militant materialism can be neither militant nor materialism. Timiryazev was obliged to observe in the first issue of the journal that the theory of Einstein, who, according to Timiryazev, is himself not making any active attack on the foundations of materialism, has already been seized upon by a vast number of bourgeois intellectuals of all countries; it should be noted that this applies not only to Einstein, but to a number, if not to the majority, of the great reformers of natural science since the end of the nineteenth century.

For our attitude towards this phenomenon to be a politically conscious one, it must be realised that no natural science and no materialism can hold its own in the struggle against the onslaught of bourgeois ideas and the restoration of the

bourgeois world outlook unless it stands on solid philosophical ground. In order to hold his own in this struggle and carry it to a victorious finish, the natural scientist must be a modern materialist, a conscious adherent of the materialism represented by Marx, i.e., he must be a dialectical materialist. In order to attain this aim, the contributors to *Pod Znamenem Marksizma* must arrange for the systematic study of Hegelian dialectics from a materialist standpoint, i.e., the dialectics which Marx applied practically in his *Capital* and in his historical and political works, and applied so successfully that now every day of the awakening to life and struggle of new classes in the East (Japan, India, and China)—i.e., the hundreds of millions of human beings who form the greater part of the world population and whose historical passivity and historical torpor have hitherto conditioned the stagnation and decay of many advanced European countries—every day of the awakening to life of new peoples and new classes serves as a fresh confirmation of Marxism.

Of course, this study, this interpretation, this propaganda of Hegelian dialectics is extremely difficult, and the first experiments in this direction will undoubtedly be accompanied by errors. But only he who never does anything never makes mistakes. Taking as our basis Marx's method of applying materialistically conceived Hegelian dialectics, we can and should elaborate this dialectics from all aspects, print in the journal excerpts from Hegel's principal works, interpret them materialistically and comment on them with the help of examples of the way Marx

applied dialectics, as well as of examples of dialectics in the sphere of economic and political relations, which recent history, especially modern imperialist war and revolution, provides in unusual abundance. In my opinion, the editors and contributors of *Pod Znamenem Marksizma* should be a kind of "Society of Materialist Friends of Hegelian Dialectics". Modern natural scientists (if they know how to seek, and if we learn to help them) will find in the Hegelian dialectics, materialistically interpreted, a series of answers to the philosophical problems which are being raised by the revolution in natural science and which make the intellectual admirers of bourgeois fashion "stumble" into reaction.

Unless it sets itself such a task and systematically fulfils it, materialism cannot be militant materialism. It will be not so much the fighter as the fought, to use an expression of Shchedrin's Without this, eminent natural scientists will as often as hitherto be helpless in making their philosophical deductions and generalisations. For natural science is progressing so fast and is undergoing such a profound revolutionary upheaval in all spheres that it cannot possibly dispense with philosophical deductions.

In conclusion, I will cite an example which has nothing to do with philosophy, but does at any rate concern social questions, to which *Pod Znamenem Marksizma* also desires to devote attention.

It is an example of the way in which modern pseudo-science actually serves as a vehicle for the grossest and most infamous reactionary views.

I was recently sent a copy of *Ekonomist* No. 1 (1922), published by the Eleventh Department of the Russian Technical Society.[65] The young Communist who sent me this journal (he probably had no time to read it) rashly expressed considerable agreement with it. In reality the journal is—I do not know to what extent deliberately—an organ of the modern feudalists, disguised of course under a cloak of science, democracy and so forth.

A certain Mr. P. A. Sorokin publishes in this journal an extensive, so-called "sociological", inquiry on "The Influence of the War". This learned article abounds in learned references to the "sociological" works of the author and his numerous teachers and colleagues abroad. Here is an example of his learning.

On page 83, I read:

> "For every 10,000 marriages in Petrograd there are now 92.2 divorces—a fantastic figure. Of every 100 annulled marriages, 51.1 had lasted less than one year, 11 per cent less than one month, 22 per cent less than two months, 41 per cent less than three to six months and only 26 per cent over six months. These figures show that modern legal marriage is a form which conceals what is in effect extra-marital sexual intercourse, enabling lovers of 'strawberries' to satisfy their appetites in a 'legal' way" (*Ekonomist* No. 1, p. 83).

Both this gentleman and the Russian Technical Society, which publishes this journal and gives space to this kind of talk, no doubt regard themselves as adherents of democracy and would consider it a great insult to be called what they are in fact, namely, feudalists, reactionaries, "graduated flunkeys of clericalism".

Even the slightest acquaintance with the legislation of bourgeois countries on marriage, divorce and illegitimate children, and with the actual state of affairs in this field, is enough to show anyone interested in the subject that modern bourgeois democracy, even in all the most democratic bourgeois republics, exhibits a truly feudal attitude in this respect towards women and towards children born out of wedlock.

This, of course, does not prevent the Mensheviks, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, a part of the anarchists and all the corresponding parties in the West from shouting about democracy and how it is being violated by the Bolsheviks. But as a matter of fact the Bolshevik revolution is the only consistently democratic revolution in respect to such questions as marriage, divorce and the position of children born out of wedlock. And this is a question which most directly affects the interests of more than half the population of any country. Although a large number of bourgeois revolutions preceded it and called themselves democratic, the Bolshevik revolution was the first and only revolution to wage a resolute struggle in this respect both against reaction and feudalism and against the usual hypocrisy of the ruling and propertied classes.

If 92 divorces for every 10,000 marriages seem to Mr. Sorokin a fantastic figure, one can only suppose that either the author lived and was brought up in a monastery so entirely walled off from life that hardly anyone will believe such a monastery ever existed, or that he is distorting the truth in the interest of reaction and the

bourgeoisie. Anybody in the least acquainted with social conditions in bourgeois countries knows that the real number of actual divorces (of course, not sanctioned by church and law) is everywhere immeasurably greater. The only difference between Russia and other countries in this respect is that our laws do not sanctify hypocrisy and the debasement of the woman and her child, but openly and in the name of the government declare systematic war on all hypocrisy and all debasement.

The Marxist journal will have to wage war also on these modern "educated" feudalists. Not a few of them, very likely, are in receipt of government money and are employed by our government to educate our youth, although they are no more fitted for this than notorious perverts are fitted for the post of superintendents of educational establishments for the young.

The working class of Russia proved able to win power; but it has not yet learned to utilise it, for otherwise it would have long ago very politely dispatched such teachers and members of learned societies to countries with a bourgeois "democracy". That is the proper place for such feudalists.

But it will learn, given the will to learn.

March 12, 1922

Pod Znamenem Marksizma No 3, March 1922
Signed *N Lenin*

Collected Works, Vol 33, pp 227-36

TO N. I. BUKHARIN

Comrade Bukharin,

I send you today's *Pravda*. Now, why print stupidities in the guise of the article by Pletnyov,[66] who puts on pompous airs with all the learned and fashionable words he can? I have marked two stupidities and put a number of question marks. The author has to learn not "proletarian" science, but simply to learn. Can it be that the editorial board of *Pravda* is not going to explain the author's mistakes to him? Why, this is *falsification* of historical materialism! Playing at historical materialism!

Yours,
Lenin

Written on September 27, 1922

Published for the first time in 1950 in the Fourth (Russian) Edition of the *Collected Works*, Vol. 35

Collected Works, Vol. 35, p. 554

PAGES FROM A DIARY

The recent publication of the report on literacy among the population of Russia, based on the census of 1920 (*Literacy in Russia*, issued by the Central Statistical Board, Public Education Section, Moscow, 1922), is a very important event.

Below I quote a table from this report on the state of literacy among the population of Russia in 1897 and 1920.

	Literates per thousand males		Literates per thousand females		Literates per thousand population	
	1897	1920	1897	1920	1897	1920
1. European Russia	326	422	136	255	229	330
2. North Caucasus	241	357	56	215	150	281
3. Siberia (Western)	170	307	46	134	108	218
Overall average	318	409	131	244	223	319

At a time when we hold forth on proletarian culture and the relation in which it stands to bourgeois culture, facts and figures reveal that we are in a very bad way even as far as bourgeois culture is concerned. As might have been expected, it appears that we are still a very

long way from attaining universal literacy, and that even compared with tsarist times (1897) our progress has been far too slow. This should serve as a stern warning and reproach to those who have been soaring in the empyreal heights of "proletarian culture". It shows what a vast amount of urgent spade-work we still have to do to reach the standard of an ordinary West-European civilised country. It also shows what a vast amount of work we have to do today to achieve, on the basis of our proletarian gains, anything like a real cultural standard

We must not confine ourselves to this incontrovertible but too theoretical proposition. The very next time we revise our quarterly budget we must take this matter up in a practical way as well. In the first place, of course, we shall have to cut down the expenditure of government departments other than the People's Commissariat of Education, and the sums thus released should be assigned for the latter's needs. In a year like the present, when we are relatively well supplied, we must not be chary in increasing the bread ration for schoolteachers.

Generally speaking, it cannot be said that the work now being done in public education is too narrow. Quite a lot is being done to get the old teachers out of their rut, to attract them to the new problems, to rouse their interest in new methods of education, and in such problems as religion.

But we are not doing the main thing. We are not doing anything—or doing far from enough—to raise the schoolteacher to the level that is absolutely essential if we want any culture at

all, proletarian or even bourgeois. We must bear in mind the semi-Asiatic ignorance from which we have not yet extricated ourselves, and from which we cannot extricate ourselves without strenuous effort—although we have every opportunity to do so, because nowhere are the masses of the people so interested in real culture as they are in our country; nowhere are the problems of this culture tackled so thoroughly and consistently as they are in our country; in no other country is state power in the hands of the working class which, in its mass, is fully aware of the deficiencies, I shall not say of its culture, but of its literacy; nowhere is the working class so ready to make, and nowhere is it actually making, such sacrifices to improve its position in this respect as in our country.

Too little, far too little, is still being done by us to adjust our state budget to satisfy, as a first measure, the requirements of elementary public education. Even in our People's Commissariat of Education we all too often find disgracefully inflated staffs in some state publishing establishment, which is contrary to the concept that the state's first concern should not be publishing houses but that there should be people to read, that the number of people able to read is greater, so that book publishing should have a wider political field in future Russia. Owing to the old (and bad) habit, we are still devoting much more time and effort to technical questions, such as the question of book publishing, than to the general political question of literacy among the people.

If we take the Central Vocational Education

Board, we are sure that there, too, we shall find far too much that is superfluous and inflated by departmental interests, much that is ill-adjusted to the requirements of broad public education. Far from everything that we find in the Central Vocational Education Board can be justified by the legitimate desire first of all to improve and give a practical slant to the education of our young factory workers. If we examine the staff of the Central Vocational Education Board carefully we shall find very much that is inflated and is in that respect fictitious and should be done away with. There is still very much in the proletarian and peasant state that can and must be economised for the purpose of promoting literacy among the people; this can be done by closing institutions which are playthings of a semi-aristocratic type, or institutions we can still do without and will be able to do without, and shall have to do without, for a long time to come, considering the state of literacy among the people as revealed by the statistics.

Our schoolteacher should be raised to a standard he has never achieved, and cannot achieve, in bourgeois society. This is a truism and requires no proof. We must strive for this state of affairs by working steadily, methodically and persistently to raise the teacher to a higher cultural level, to train him thoroughly for his really high calling and—mainly, mainly and mainly—to improve his position materially.

We must systematically step up our efforts to organise the schoolteachers so as to transform them from the bulwark of the bourgeois system that they still are in all capitalist countries

without exception, into the bulwark of the Soviet system, in order, through their agency, to divert the peasantry from alliance with the bourgeoisie and to bring them into alliance with the proletariat.

I want briefly to emphasise the special importance in this respect of regular visits to the villages; such visits, it is true, are already being practised and should be regularly promoted. We should not stint money—which we all too often waste on the machinery of state that is almost entirely a product of the past historical epoch—on measures like these visits to the villages.

For the speech I was to have delivered at the Congress of Soviets in December 1922 I collected data on the patronage undertaken by urban workers over villagers. Part of these data was obtained for me by Comrade Khodorovsky, and since I have been unable to deal with this problem and give it publicity through the Congress, I submit the matter to the comrades for discussion now.

Here we have a fundamental political question—the relations between town and country—which is of decisive importance for the whole of our revolution. While the bourgeois state methodically concentrates all its efforts on doping the urban workers, adapting all the literature published at state expense and at the expense of the tsarist and bourgeois parties for this purpose, we can and must utilise our political power to make the urban worker an effective vehicle of communist ideas among the rural proletariat.

I said "communist", but I hasten to make a reservation for fear of causing a misunderstand-

ing, or of being taken too literally. Under no circumstances must this be understood to mean that we should immediately propagate purely and strictly communist ideas in the countryside. As long as our countryside lacks the material basis for communism, it will be, I should say, harmful, in fact, I should say, fatal, for communism to do so.

That is a fact. We must start by establishing contacts between town and country without the preconceived aim of implanting communism in the rural districts. It is an aim which cannot be achieved at the present time. It is inopportune, and to set an aim like that at the present time would be harmful, instead of useful, to the cause.

But it is our duty to establish contacts between the urban workers and the rural working people, to establish between them a form of comradeship which can easily be created. This is one of the fundamental tasks of the working class which holds power. To achieve this we must form a number of associations (Party, trade union and private) of factory workers, which would devote themselves regularly to assisting the villages in their cultural development.

Is it possible to "attach" all the urban groups to all the village groups, so that every working-class group may take advantage regularly of every opportunity, of every occasion to serve the cultural needs of the village group it is "attached" to? Or will it be possible to find other forms of contact? I here confine myself solely to formulating the question in order to draw the comrades' attention to it, to point out the

available experience of Western Siberia (to which Comrade Khodorovsky drew my attention) and to present this gigantic, historic cultural task in all its magnitude.

We are doing almost nothing for the rural districts outside our official budget or outside official channels. True, in our country the nature of the cultural relations between town and village is automatically and inevitably changing. Under capitalism the town introduced political, economic, moral, physical, etc., corruption into the countryside. In our case, towns are automatically beginning to introduce the very opposite of this into the countryside. But, I repeat, all this is going on automatically, spontaneously, and can be improved (and later increased a hundredfold) by doing it consciously, methodically and systematically.

We shall begin to advance (and shall then surely advance a hundred times more quickly) only after we have studied the question, after we have formed all sorts of workers' organisations—doing everything to prevent them from becoming bureaucratic—to take up the matter, discuss it and get things done.

January 2, 1923

Pravda No 2
January 4, 1923

Collected Works,
Vol 33, pp 462-66

Signed *N. Lenin*

From ON CO-OPERATION

II

Whenever I wrote about the New Economic Policy I always quoted the article on state capitalism[67] which I wrote in 1918. This has more than once aroused doubts in the minds of certain young comrades. But their doubts were mainly on abstract political points.

It seemed to them that the term "state capitalism" could not be applied to a system under which the means of production were owned by the working class, a working class that held political power. They did not notice, however, that I used the term "state capitalism", *firstly*, to connect historically our present position with the position adopted in my controversy with the so-called Left Communists[68]; also, I argued at the time that state capitalism would be superior to our existing economy. It was important for me to show the continuity between ordinary state capitalism and the unusual, even very unusual, state capitalism to which I referred in introducing the reader to the New Economic Policy. *Secondly*, the practical purpose was always important to me. And the practical purpose of

our New Economic Policy was to lease out concessions. In the prevailing circumstances, concessions in our country would unquestionably have been a pure type of state capitalism That is how I argued about state capitalism.

But there is another aspect of the matter for which we may need state capitalism, or at least a comparison with it. It is the question of co-operatives

In the capitalist state, co-operatives are no doubt collective capitalist institutions Nor is there any doubt that under our present economic conditions, when we combine private capitalist enterprises—but in no other way than on nationalised land and in no other way than under the control of the working-class state—with enterprises of a consistently socialist type (the means of production, the land on which the enterprises are situated, and the enterprises as a whole belonging to the state), the question arises about a third type of enterprise, the co-operatives, which were not formerly regarded as an independent type differing fundamentally from the others. Under private capitalism, co-operative enterprises differ from capitalist enterprises as collective enterprises differ from private enterprises. Under state capitalism, co-operative enterprises differ from state capitalist enterprises, firstly, because they are private enterprises. and, secondly, because they are collective enterprises. Under our present system, co-operative enterprises differ from private capitalist enterprises because they are collective enterprises, but do not differ from socialist enterprises if the land on which they are situated and the

means of production belong to the state, i e , the working class.

This circumstance is not considered sufficiently when co-operatives are discussed. It is forgotten that owing to the special features of our political system, our co-operatives acquire an altogether exceptional significance. If we exclude concessions, which, incidentally, have not developed on any considerable scale, co-operation under our conditions nearly always coincides fully with socialism

Let me explain what I mean. Why were the plans of the old co-operators, from Robert Owen onwards, fantastic? Because they dreamed of peacefully remodelling contemporary society into socialism without taking account of such fundamental questions as the class struggle, the capture of political power by the working class, the overthrow of the rule of the exploiting class. That is why we are right in regarding as entirely fantastic this "co-operative" socialism, and as romantic, and even banal, the dream of transforming class enemies into class collaborators and class war into class peace (so-called class truce) by merely organising the population in co-operative societies

Undoubtedly we were right from the point of view of the fundamental task of the present day, for socialism cannot be established without a class struggle for political power in the state.

But see how things have changed now that political power is in the hands of the working class, now that the political power of the exploiters is overthrown and all the means of production (except those which the workers' state

voluntarily abandons on specified terms and for a certain time to the exploiters in the form of concessions) are owned by the working class.

Now we are entitled to say that for us the mere growth of co-operation (with the "slight" exception mentioned above) is identical with the growth of socialism, and at the same time we have to admit that there has been a radical modification in our whole outlook on socialism. The radical modification is this; formerly we placed, and had to place, the main emphasis on the political struggle, on revolution, on winning political power, etc. Now the emphasis is changing and shifting to peaceful, organisational, "cultural" work. I should say that emphasis is shifting to educational work, were it not for our international relations, were it not for the fact that we have to fight for our position on a world scale. If we leave that aside, however, and confine ourselves to internal economic relations, the emphasis in our work is certainly shifting to education.

Two main tasks confront us, which constitute the epoch—to reorganise our machinery of state, which is utterly useless, and which we took over in its entirety from the preceding epoch; during the past five years of struggle we did not, and could not, drastically reorganise it Our second task is educational work among the peasants And the economic object of this educational work among the peasants is to organise the latter in co-operative societies. If the whole of the peasantry had been organised in co-operatives, we would by now have been standing with both feet on the soil of socialism. But the organisation

of the entire peasantry in co-operative societies presupposes a standard of culture among the peasants (precisely among the peasants as the overwhelming mass) that cannot, in fact, be achieved without a cultural revolution.

Our opponents told us repeatedly that we were rash in undertaking to implant socialism in an insufficiently cultured country. But they were misled by our having started from the opposite end to that prescribed by theory (the theory of pedants of all kinds), because in our country the political and social revolution preceded the cultural revolution, that very cultural revolution which nevertheless now confronts us.

This cultural revolution would now suffice to make our country a completely socialist country; but it presents immense difficulties of a purely cultural (for we are illiterate) and material character (for to be cultured we must achieve a certain development of the material means of production, must have a certain material base).

January 6, 1923

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Signed *N Lenin*

Collected Works,
Vol 33, pp 472-75

OUR REVOLUTION

(Apropos of N. Sukhanov's Notes)

I

I have lately been glancing through Sukhanov's notes on the revolution. What strikes one most is the pedantry of all our petty-bourgeois democrats and of all the heroes of the Second International. Apart from the fact that they are all extremely faint-hearted, that when it comes to the minutest deviation from the German model even the best of them fortify themselves with reservations—apart from this characteristic, which is common to all petty-bourgeois democrats and has been abundantly manifested by them throughout the revolution, what strikes one is their slavish imitation of the past.

They all call themselves Marxists, but their conception of Marxism is impossibly pedantic. They have completely failed to understand what is decisive in Marxism, namely, its revolutionary dialectics. They have even absolutely failed to understand Marx's plain statements that in times of revolution the utmost flexibility[69] is demanded, and have even failed to notice, for instance, the statements Marx made in his let-

ters—I think it was in 1856—expressing the hope of combining a peasant war in Germany, which might create a revolutionary situation, with the working-class movement[70]—they avoid even this plain statement and walk round and about it like a cat around a bowl of hot porridge.

Their conduct betrays them as cowardly reformists who are afraid to deviate from the bourgeoisie, let alone break with it, and at the same time they disguise their cowardice with the wildest rhetoric and braggartry. But what strikes one in all of them even from the purely theoretical point of view is their utter inability to grasp the following Marxist considerations: up to now they have seen capitalism and bourgeois democracy in Western Europe follow a definite path of development, and cannot conceive that this path can be taken as a model only *mutatis mutandis*, only with certain amendments (quite insignificant from the standpoint of the general development of world history).

First—the revolution connected with the first imperialist world war. Such a revolution was bound to reveal new features, or variations, resulting from the war itself, for the world has never seen such a war in such a situation. We find that since the war the bourgeoisie of the wealthiest countries have to this day been unable to restore "normal" bourgeois relations. Yet our reformists—petty bourgeois who make a show of being revolutionaries—believed, and still believe, that normal bourgeois relations are the limit (thus far shalt thou go and no farther). And even their conception of "normal" is extremely stereotyped and narrow.

Secondly, they are complete strangers to the idea that while the development of world history as a whole follows general laws it is by no means precluded, but, on the contrary, presumed, that certain periods of development may display peculiarities in either the form or the sequence of this development. For instance, it does not even occur to them that because Russia stands on the border-line between the civilised countries and the countries which this war has for the first time definitely brought into the orbit of civilisation—all the Oriental, non-European countries—she could and was, indeed, bound to reveal certain distinguishing features; although these, of course, are in keeping with the general line of world development, they distinguish her revolution from those which took place in the West-European countries and introduce certain partial innovations as the revolution moves on to the countries of the East.

Infinitely stereotyped, for instance, is the argument they learned by rote during the development of West-European Social-Democracy, namely, that we are not yet ripe for socialism, that, as certain "learned" gentlemen among them put it, the objective economic premises for socialism do not exist in our country. It does not occur to any of them to ask: but what about a people that found itself in a revolutionary situation such as that created during the first imperialist war? Might it not, influenced by the hopelessness of its situation, fling itself into a struggle that would offer it at least some chance of securing conditions for the further development of civilisation that were somewhat unusual?

"The development of the productive forces of Russia has not attained the level that makes socialism possible." All the heroes of the Second International, including, of course, Sukhanov, beat the drums about this proposition. They keep harping on this incontrovertible proposition in a thousand different keys, and think that it is the decisive criterion of our revolution.

But what if the situation, which drew Russia into the imperialist world war that involved every more or less influential West-European country and made her a witness of the eve of the revolutions maturing or partly already begun in the East, gave rise to circumstances that put Russia and her development in a position which enabled us to achieve precisely that combination of a "peasant war" with the working-class movement suggested in 1856 by no less a Marxist than Marx himself as a possible prospect for Prussia?

What if the complete hopelessness of the situation, by stimulating the efforts of the workers and peasants tenfold, offered us the opportunity to create the fundamental requisites of civilisation in a different way from that of the West-European countries? Has that altered the general line of development of world history? Has that altered the basic relations between the basic classes of all the countries that are being, or have been, drawn into the general course of world history?

If a definite level of culture is required for the building of socialism (although nobody can say just what that definite "level of culture" is, for it differs in every West-European country),

why cannot we begin by first achieving the prerequisites for that definite level of culture in a revolutionary way, and *then*, with the aid of the workers' and peasants' government and the Soviet system, proceed to overtake the other nations?

January 16, 1923

II

You say that civilisation is necessary for the building of socialism. Very good. But why could we not first create such prerequisites of civilisation in our country as the expulsion of the landowners and the Russian capitalists, and then start moving towards socialism? Where, in what books, have you read that such variations of the customary historical sequence of events are impermissible or impossible?

Napoleon, I think, wrote: "*On s'engage et puis ... on voit.*" Rendered freely this means: "First engage in a serious battle and then see what happens." Well, we did first engage in a serious battle in October 1917, and then saw such details of development (from the standpoint of world history they were certainly details) as the Brest peace, the New Economic Policy, and so forth. And now there can be no doubt that in the main we have been victorious.

Our Sukhanovs, not to mention Social-Democrats still farther to the right, never even dream that revolutions could be made otherwise. Our European philistines never even dream

that the subsequent revolutions in Oriental countries, which possess much vaster populations and a much vaster diversity of social conditions, will undoubtedly display even greater distinctions than the Russian revolution.

It need hardly be said that a textbook written on Kautskian lines was a very useful thing in its day. But it is time, for all that, to abandon the idea that it foresaw all the forms of development of subsequent world history. It would be timely to say that those who think so are simply fools.

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Signed: *Lenin*

From BETTER FEWER, BUT BETTER

In the matter of improving our state apparatus, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection[71] should not, in my opinion, either strive after quantity or hurry. We have so far been able to devote so little thought and attention to the efficiency of our state apparatus that it would now be quite legitimate if we took special care to secure its thorough organisation, and concentrated in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection a staff of workers really abreast of the times, i.e., not inferior to the best West-European standards. For a socialist republic this condition is, of course, too modest. But our experience of the first five years has fairly crammed our heads with mistrust and scepticism. These qualities assert themselves involuntarily when, for example, we hear people dilating at too great length and too flippantly on "proletarian" culture For a start, we should be satisfied with real bourgeois culture; for a start, we should be glad to dispense with the cruder types of pre-bourgeois culture, i e., bureaucratic culture or serf culture, etc. In matters of culture, haste and sweeping measures are most harmful. Many of our young writers and Communists should get this well into their heads.

Thus, in the matter of our state apparatus we should now draw the conclusion from our past

experience that it would be better to proceed more slowly.

Our state apparatus is so deplorable, not to say wretched, that we must first think very carefully how to combat its defects, bearing in mind that these defects are rooted in the past, which, although it has been overthrown, has not yet been overcome, has not yet reached the stage of a culture that has receded into the distant past. I say culture deliberately, because in these matters we can only regard as achieved what has become part and parcel of our culture, of our social life, our habits. We might say that the good in our social system has not been properly studied, understood, and taken to heart; it has been hastily grasped at; it has not been verified or tested, corroborated by experience, and not made durable, etc. Of course, it could not be otherwise in a revolutionary epoch, when development proceeded at such breakneck speed that in a matter of five years we passed from tsarism to the Soviet system.

It is time we did something about it. We must show sound scepticism for too rapid progress, for boastfulness, etc. We must give thought to testing the steps forward we proclaim every hour, take every minute and then prove every second that they are flimsy, superficial and misunderstood. The most harmful thing here would be haste. The most harmful thing would be to rely on the assumption that we know at least something, or that we have any considerable number of elements necessary for the building of a really new state apparatus, one really worthy to be called socialist, Soviet, etc.

No, we are ridiculously deficient of such an apparatus, and even of the elements of it, and we must remember that we should not stint time on building it, and that it will take many, many years.

What elements have we for building this apparatus? Only two. First, the workers who are absorbed in the struggle for socialism. These elements are not sufficiently educated. They would like to build a better apparatus for us, but they do not know how. They cannot build one. They have not yet developed the culture required for this; and it is culture that is required. Nothing will be achieved in this by doing things in a rush, by assault, by vim or vigour, or in general, by any of the best human qualities. Secondly, we have elements of knowledge, education and training, but they are ridiculously inadequate compared with all other countries.

Here we must not forget that we are too prone to compensate (or imagine that we can compensate) our lack of knowledge by zeal, haste, etc.

In order to renovate our state apparatus we must at all costs set out, first, to learn, secondly, to learn, and thirdly, to learn, and then see to it that learning shall not remain a dead letter, or a fashionable catch-phrase (and we should admit in all frankness that this happens very often with us), that learning shall really become part of our very being, that it shall actually and fully become a constituent element of our social life.

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Signed: *N. Lenin*

SUPPLEMENT

N. K. KRUPSKAYA

ILYICH'S FAVOURITE BOOKS

The comrade who first introduced me to Ilyich told me that he was a man of scientific bent, that he read scientific books exclusively, that he had never read a novel and never read poetry. This surprised me. I myself in my youth had read all the classics; I knew practically the whole of Lermontov by heart, and such writers as Chernyshevsky, Lev Tolstoi and Uspensky had, somehow, become part of my life. It seemed strange to me that here was a man not the least bit interested in all that.

Afterwards, when in the course of work I became better acquainted with Ilyich, got to know how he appraised people, and observed how closely he studied life and people, then the living Ilyich displaced the image of the man who had never read a book dealing with the life of the people.

It so happened that the complications of life prevented us from discussing this subject. It was only later, during our exile in Siberia, that I learned that Ilyich knew the classics as well as I did, and had not only read, but had re-read Turgenev, for instance. I brought with me to

Siberia books by Pushkin, Lermontov and Nekrasov. Ilyich arranged them near his bed, alongside Hegel, and read them over and over again in the evenings. Pushkin was his favourite. But it was not only the style that he liked. For example, he was very fond of Chernyshevsky's *What Is To Be Done?* despite the fact that its style is somewhat naïve. I was surprised when I saw how attentively he read this book and how he noticed its finest points. Incidentally, he was very fond of Chernyshevsky, and his Siberian album contained two photographs of this writer, on one of which he had written the dates of the writer's birth and death This album also contained a photograph of Emile Zola and of Russian writers, Herzen and Pisarev. At one time Ilyich was very fond of Pisarev and read many of his works. In Siberia we also had a copy of Goethe's *Faust*, and a volume of Heine's poems, both in German.

Upon returning to Moscow from exile Ilyich went to the theatre to see *Der Kutscher Hänschel*. He said afterwards that he had greatly enjoyed it.

Among the books he liked while in Munich I remember Gerhardt's *Bei Mama*, and *Büttnerbauer* by Polenz.

Afterwards, during our second emigration in Paris, Ilyich found pleasure in reading Victor Hugo's *Châtiments*, dealing with the 1848 revolution; Hugo wrote it while abroad, and copies were smuggled into France Although there is a naïve pomposity in this verse, one feels, nevertheless, the breath of revolution. Ilyich eagerly frequented the cafés and the suburban theatres

in Paris to hear the revolutionary chansonniers, who, in the working-class districts, sang about everything—about how intoxicated peasants elected a travelling agitator to the Chamber of Deputies, about the bringing up of children, unemployment and so on. Ilyich was particularly fond of Montégus. The son of a Paris Communard, he was a great favourite in the working class districts. True, in his improvised songs—richly garnished with the flavour of life—there was no definite ideology of any kind, but there was much in them that appealed Ilyich often hummed his Greeting to the 17th Regiment, which had refused to fire on strikers: "*Salut, salut à vous, soldats, du 17-me.*" Once, at a Russian social evening, Ilyich conversed with Montégus and it was strange to see these two men who differed so vastly—when the war broke out Montégus sided with the chauvinists—dreaming of world revolution But things like that happen—you meet someone in a railway carriage whom you have never known before, and to the accompaniment of the grinding wheels you talk in serious vein and say things that you would never say at another time, and then you part and never meet again. And so it was here. Moreover, the conversation was in French, and it is easier to dream aloud in a foreign language than in one's own. We had the services of a French charwoman a couple of hours a day. Once Ilyich heard her singing a song about Alsace. He asked her to sing it over again and, afterwards, upon memorising the words, he often sang it himself. The song ended with the words:

Vous avez pris l'Alsace et la Lorraine
Mais malgré vous nous resterons français,
Vous avez pu germaniser nos plaines
Mais notre coeur—vous ne l'aurez jamais!

("You have seized Alsace and Lorraine, but in spite of you we shall remain French; you have managed to Germanise our fields, but never will you have our hearts.")

That was in the year 1909, when reaction was rampant and the Party lay defeated. But its revolutionary spirit had not been broken. And the song suited Ilyich's mood. One should have heard the feeling he put into the words:

Mais notre coeur—vous ne l'aurez jamais!

During those very hard years in emigration, concerning which Ilyich always spoke with a feeling of sadness (when we returned to Russia he repeated once more what he had often said before: "Why did we ever leave Geneva for Paris?")—during those grim years he dreamed and dreamed, whether in conversation with Montégus, or fervently singing the song about Alsace, or during the sleepless nights when he read Verhaeren.

Still later, during the war, Ilyich was attracted by Barbusse's *Le Feu*, which he regarded as an extremely important book—a book which was in tune with his own feelings.

We seldom visited the theatre. On the rare occasions that we did, the insipidness of the play and the bad acting got on Ilyich's nerves. Usually we left the theatre after the first act. The

other comrades laughed at us and asked why we wasted our money.

On one occasion, however, Ilyich sat through a play; this I think was at the end of 1915 in Berne, and the play was Tolstoi's *The Living Corpse*. Although it was acted in German, the man who took the role of the prince was a Russian and he succeeded in putting over Tolstoi's idea Tense and excited, Ilyich followed every detail of the play

And lastly, in Russia To Ilyich the new art seemed somehow to be alien and incomprehensible. Once we were asked to a concert in the Kremlin for Red Army men. Ilyich was given a seat in the front row. The actress Gzovskaya, declaiming something by Mayakovsky—"Speed is our body and the drum our heart"—was gesturing right in front of Ilyich, who was taken aback by the suddenness of it all; he grasped very little of the recitation and heaved a sigh of relief when Gzovskaya was replaced by another actor who began to read Chekhov's *Evil-doer*.

One evening Ilyich wanted to see for himself how the young people were getting on in the communes. We decided to visit our young friend Varya Armand who lived in a commune for art school students. I think that we made the visit on the day Kropotkin was buried, in 1921. It was a hungry year, but the young people were filled with enthusiasm. The people in the commune slept practically on bare boards, they had neither bread nor salt. "But we do have cereals," said a radiant-faced member of the commune. With this cereal they boiled a good porridge for Ilyich. Ilyich looked at

the young people, at the radiant faces of the boys and girls who crowded around him, and their joy was reflected in his face. They showed him their naïve drawings, explained their meaning, and bombarded him with questions And he, smiling, evaded answering and parried by asking questions of his own· "What do you read? Do you read Pushkin?"—"Oh, no," said someone, "after all he was a bourgeois; we read Mayakovsky." Ilyich smiled. "I think," he said, "that Pushkin is better." After this Ilyich took a more favourable view of Mayakovsky. Whenever the poet's name was mentioned he recalled the young art students who, full of life and gladness, and ready to die for the Soviet system, were unable to find words in the contemporary language with which to express themselves, and sought the answer in the obscure verse of Mayakovsky. Later, however, Ilyich once praised Mayakovsky for the verse in which he ridiculed Soviet red tape. Of the books of the day, I remember that Ilyich was enthusiastic about Ehrenburg's war novel. "You know," he said triumphantly, "that book by Ilya the Shaggy (Ehrenburg's nickname) is a fine piece of work."

We went to the Art Theatre several times On one occasion we saw *The Deluge*, which Ilyich liked very much. The next day we saw Gorky's *The Lower Depths* Ilyich liked Gorky the man, with whom he had become closely acquainted at the London Congress of the Party, and he liked Gorky the artist; he said that Gorky the artist was capable of grasping things instantly. With Gorky he always spoke very frankly. And so it goes without saying that he set high standards

for a Gorky production. The over-acting irritated him. After seeing *The Lower Depths* he avoided the theatre for a long time. Once the two of us went to see Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya*, which he liked very much. And finally, the last time we went to the theatre, in 1922—we saw a stage version of Dickens's *Cricket on the Hearth*. After the first act Ilyich found it dull; the saccharine sentimentality got on his nerves, and during the conversation between the old toymaker and his blind daughter he could stand it no longer and left in the middle of the act.

During the last months of his life I used to read him fiction at his request, usually in the evenings. I read him Shchedrin, and Gorky's *My Universities*. He also liked to hear poetry, especially Demyan Bedny, preferring his heroic verse to his satirical.

Sometimes, when listening to poetry, he would gaze thoughtfully out of the window at the setting sun. I remember the poem which ended with the words "Never, never shall the Communists be slaves."

As I read, I seemed to be repeating a vow to Ilyich. Never, never shall we surrender a single gain of the Revolution....

Two days before he died I read him a story by Jack London—the book is lying now on the table in his room—*Love of Life*. This is a powerful story. Over a snowy waste where a human being had never set foot, a man, sick and dying from hunger, makes his way towards a pier on a river. His strength is giving out, he no longer walks, but crawls, and close behind him, also crawling, is a famished and dying wolf; in

the ensuing struggle between man and wolf, the man wins; half-dead, and half-crazed, he reaches his goal. Ilyich was carried away by this story. Next day he asked me to read another London story. However, with Jack London the powerful is mixed with the exceedingly weak. The second story was altogether different—one that preached bourgeois moral: the captain of a ship promises the owner that he will sell the cargo of grain at a good price; he sacrifices his life in order to keep his word. Ilyich laughed and waved his hand.

That was the last time I read to him.

Reminiscences of Lenin by His Relatives, Moscow, 1956, pp 201 07

CLARA ZETKIN

MY RECOLLECTIONS OF LENIN

(An Excerpt)

Lenin found us three women discussing art, education and upbringing. I happened at that moment to be voicing enthusiastically my astonishment at the unique and titanic cultural work of the Bolsheviks, at the unfolding in the country of creative forces striving to blaze new trails for art and education. I did not hide my impression that much of what I observed was still conjectural, mere groping in the dark, just experimental, and that along with zealous searches for new content, new forms and new ways in the sphere of culture one encounters at times an unnatural desire to follow the fashion and blindly imitate western models. Lenin at once plunged with keen interest into the conversation.

"The awakening of new forces and the harnessing of them to the task of creating a new art and culture in Soviet Russia are a good thing, a very good thing. The hurricane speed of their development is understandable and useful. We must make good the loss incurred by centuries of neglect and make good is what we want to do. Chaotic fermentation, feverish hunt for new

slogans, slogans acclaimed today with shouts of 'hosanna' in relation to certain trends in art and fields of thought, and rejected tomorrow with cries of 'crucify him'—all this is inevitable.

"Revolution unleashes all forces fettered hitherto and drives them from their deep recesses of life to the surface. Take, for example, the influence exerted by fashion and the caprices of the tsarist court as well as by the tastes and whims of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie on the development of our painting, sculpture and architecture. In society based on private property the artist produces for the market, needs customers. Our revolution freed artists from the yoke of these extremely prosaic conditions It turned the state into their defender and client providing them with orders. Every artist, and everyone who considers himself such, has the right to create freely, to follow his ideal regardless of everything.

"But, then, we are Communists, and ought not to stand idly by and give chaos free rein to develop. We should steer this process according to a worked-out plan and must shape its results. We are still far, very far from this. It seems to me that we too have our Doctors Karlstadt. We are too great 'iconoclasts in painting'. The beautiful must be preserved, taken as an example, as the point of departure even if it is 'old'. Why turn our backs on what is truly beautiful, abandon it as the point of departure for further development solely because it is 'old'? Why worship the new as a god compelling submission merely because it is 'new'? Nonsense!

Bosh and nonsense! Here much is pure hypocrisy and of course unconscious deference to the art fashions ruling the West. We are good revolutionaries but somehow we feel obliged to prove that we are also 'up to the mark in modern culture'. I however make bold to declare myself a 'barbarian'. It is beyond me to consider the products of expressionism, futurism,[73] cubism and other 'isms' the highest manifestation of artistic genius. I do not understand them. I experience no joy from them."

I could no longer restrain myself and admitted that my perception likewise was too dull to understand why an inspired face should be artistically expressed by triangles instead of a nose and why the striving for revolutionary activity should transmute the human body, in which the organs are linked up and form one complicated whole, into an amorphous soft sack hoisted on two stilts and provided with two five-pronged forks.

Lenin burst into a hearty laugh.

"Yes, dear Clara, it can't be helped. We're both old fogies. For us it is enough that we remain young and are among the foremost at least in matters concerning the revolution. But we won't be able to keep pace with the new art; we'll just have to come trailing behind.

"But," Lenin continued, "our opinion on art is not the important thing. Nor is it of much consequence what art means to a few hundred or even thousand out of a population counted by the millions. Art belongs to the people. Its roots should be deeply implanted in the very thick of the labouring masses. It should be

understood and loved by these masses It must unite and elevate their feelings, thoughts and will. It must stir to activity and develop the art instincts within them. Should we serve exquisite sweet cake to a small minority while the worker and peasant masses are in need of black bread? It goes without saying that the following is to be understood not only literally but also figuratively: we must always have before our eyes the workers and the peasants. It is for their sake that we must learn to manage, to reckon. This applies also to the sphere of art and culture.

"For art to get closer to the people and the people to art we must start by raising general educational and cultural standards. How are things with us in this regard? You grow enthusiastic over the immense cultural progress we have achieved since our advent to power. We undoubtedly can say without boasting that in this respect we have done quite a lot. We have not only 'chopped off heads', as charged by the Mensheviks of all countries and by Kautsky of yours, but have also enlightened many heads. 'Many' however only in comparison with the past, in comparison with the sins of the classes and cliques then at the helm. Immeasurably great is the thirst we have instilled in the workers and peasants for education and culture in general. This applies not only to Petrograd and Moscow, and other industrial centres, but far beyond their confines until the very villages have been reached. At the same time we are a poverty-stricken people, completely beggared. We of course wage a real and stubborn war against illiteracy. We establish libraries and reading

rooms, in the towns and villages, big and small. We organise all kinds of training courses. We present good shows and concerts, send 'mobile exhibitions' and 'educational trains' all over the land. But I repeat: what does this amount to for a multi-million population who lack the most elementary knowledge, the most primitive culture? Whereas today ten thousand and tomorrow another ten thousand are enraptured in Moscow for instance by the splendid performances of our theatres, millions of people are striving to learn how to spell their names and count, are trying to attain enough culture to know that the earth is round, not flat, and that the world is not governed by witches and sorcerers and a 'heavenly father' but by natural laws."

"Comrade Lenin," I remarked, "don't be so aggrieved by illiteracy. In some respects it has made the revolution easier for you. It has prevented the brains of the workers and peasants from being stuffed with bourgeois notions and thus from going to seed. Your agitation and propaganda are sowing virgin soil. It is easier to sow and reap where you do not first have to clear away a whole primeval forest."

"Yes, that's true," Lenin rejoined. "However only within certain limits or, to be more exact, for a certain period of our struggle. We could stand illiteracy during the fight for power, while it was necessary to destroy the old state machinery. But are we destroying merely for the sake of destroying? We are destroying for the purpose of creating something better. Illiteracy goes badly, is absolutely incompatible with the job of restoration. After all the latter, according to

Marx, must be the task of the workers and, I add, of the peasants themselves if they want to attain freedom. Our Soviet system facilitates this task. Thanks to it thousands of ordinary working people are today studying in various Soviets and Soviet bodies how to expedite restoration. They are men and women 'in the prime of life', as they are wont to say in your country. Most of them grew up under the old regime and hence received no education, acquired no culture; but now they crave for knowledge. We are fully determined to recruit ever new contingents of men and women for Soviet work and give them a certain degree of practical and theoretical education. Nevertheless we are unable to meet in full our country's demand for personnel capable of creative leadership. We are compelled to engage bureaucrats of the old type, as a result of which bureaucracy has cropped up here. I absolutely hate it, but of course I have no particular bureaucrat in view. He might be a clever man. What I hate is the system. It has a paralysing and corrupting effect from top to bottom. Widely disseminated education and training of the people is a decisive factor for overcoming and eradicating bureaucracy.

"What are our prospects for the future? We have built splendid institutions and adopted really fine measures to enable the proletarian and peasant youth to study, learn and assimilate culture. But here too we are confronted with the same vexatious question: what does all this amount to when you consider the size of our population? What is worse, we are far from having an adequate number of kindergartens,

children's homes and elementary schools. Millions of children grow into their teens without an upbringing, without education. They remain as ignorant and uncultured as their fathers and grandfathers were. How much talent perishes on that account, how much yearning for light is crushed underfoot! This is a terrible crime, when considered in terms of the happiness of the rising generation. It amounts to robbing the Soviet state, which is to be transformed into communist society, of its wealth. This is fraught with great danger."

Lenin's voice, usually so calm, quavered with indignation.

"How this question must cut him to the quick," I thought, "if it makes him deliver an agitational speech to the three of us." Someone, I do not remember exactly who, began to speak about a number of particularly obnoxious occurrences in the spheres of art and culture, attributing them to the "conditions of the times". Lenin retorted

"I know all about that. Many are sincerely convinced that the dangers and difficulties of the present period can be coped with by dispensing *panem et circenses* [bread and circuses, spectacles]. Bread—as a matter of course. As for spectacles—let them be dispensed! I don't object. But let it not be forgotten that spectacles are not really great art. I would sooner call them more or less attractive entertainment. Nor should we be oblivious of the fact that our workers and peasants bear no resemblance to the Roman lumpenproletariat. They are not maintained at state expense but on the contrary they

themselves maintain the state by their labour. They 'made' the revolution and upheld its cause, shedding torrents of their blood and bearing untold sacrifice. Indeed, our workers and peasants deserve something better than spectacles They are entitled to real great art. That is why we put foremost public education and training on the biggest scale. It creates a basis for culture, provided of course that the grain problem has been solved. On this basis a really new, great, communist art should arise which will create a form in correspondence with its content. Noble tasks of vast importance are waiting to be solved by our intellectuals along this line. By learning to understand these tasks and accomplishing them they would pay the debt they owe to the proletarian revolution, which to them too opened wide the portals that led from the vile conditions of life, described in such masterly fashion in the *Communist Manifesto*, to the grand open spaces."

That night—the hour was already late—we had broached other themes as well, but the impression these discussions left was but faint in comparison with that produced by Lenin's remarks on art, culture, public education and upbringing.

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Lenin, who interpreted the mass in the spirit of Marx, naturally attached great importance to its all-sided cultural development. He considered it the greatest gain of the revolution and a sure guarantee that communism would be achieved.

"The Red October," he told me once, "opened wide the road to a cultural revolution on the grandest scale, which is being brought about on the basis of the incipient economic revolution and in constant interaction with it. Imagine millions of men and women of various nationalities and races and of various degrees of culture all striving on towards a new life. A superb task confronts the Soviet Government. In a few years or decades it must redress the cultural wrong of many centuries. In addition to the agencies and institutions of the Soviet Government, cultural progress is promoted also by numerous organisations and societies of scientists, artists and teachers. Vast cultural work is carried on by our trade unions at the different enterprises and by our co-operative organisations in the villages. The activity of our Party is very much in evidence everywhere. A great deal is being done. Our successes are great compared with what there was, but they look small considering what remains to be done. Our cultural revolution has only just begun."

Casually referring to a splendid ballet being performed in the Bolshoi Theatre, Lenin remarked with a smile

"Our ballet, theatre, and opera, and our exhibitions of what is new and newest in painting and sculpture are proof to many people abroad that we Bolsheviks are not at all such horrible barbarians as was believed there. I do not deny the significance of such and similar cultural manifestations of our society. I do not underrate their import. But I admit I am more gratified by the setting up of two or three

elementary schools in some out-of-the-way villages than by the most magnificent exhibit at some art show. A rise in the general cultural standards of the masses will provide the sound and solid basis needed for the training of the powerful and inexhaustible forces that will develop Soviet art, science and technology. Our aspirations to establish culture and to disseminate it here in our country is extraordinarily great. It must be admitted that we are experimenting a lot. Alongside of serious work there is much that is puerile, immature, that consumes a great deal of our energy and means. Creative life evidently requires extravagance in society as well as in nature. We already have the most important requisites for the cultural revolution since the conquest of power by the proletariat, namely: the awakening of the masses, their aspiration to culture. New people are growing up, produced by the new social order and creating this order."

Clara Zetkin *My Recollections of Lenin*, Moscow, 1956, pp 17 28, 90 91

A. V. LUNACHARSKY

LENIN AND THE ARTS

In the course of his life Lenin had no time to engage in anything like a close study of the arts, and since dilettantism had always been hateful to him and alien to his nature he did not like to make any statements on art. Still, he had very definite tastes. He loved the Russian classics, and liked realism in literature, dramaturgy, painting, etc.

In 1905, during the first revolution, he once had to spend the night at the house of D. I. Leshchenko who had a large collection of Knackfuss editions of the world's greatest writers. The next morning Vladimir Ilyich said to me: "What a fascinating thing is the history of art! The amount of work there is here for a Marxist! I couldn't fall asleep till morning, I looked through one book after the other. And I felt sorry that I never had and never will have any time for art." I remember those words very clearly.

I had several meetings with him in connection with various art competitions, already after the revolution. One time, I remember, he called me in and together we went to an exhibition

of monument designs from which a substitute had to be chosen for the figure of Alexander III which had been pulled down from its gorgeous pedestal near the Church of the Saviour. Vladimir Ilyich examined all the designs very critically. And he did not like any of them. One design, done in a futuristic manner, seemed to amaze him particularly, but when his opinion was asked he said "I'm quite in the woods here Ask Lunacharsky." He was very glad when I told him that I didn't see a single worthy design there, and said. "And I was afraid you'd erect some futuristic monstrosity."

Another time the matter concerned a monument to Karl Marx. The well-known sculptor M. was especially insistent in his claims. He presented his design of a large monument entitled "Karl Marx Supported by Four Elephants". This unexpected motif struck all of us, and Vladimir Ilyich too, as most peculiar. The sculptor then began to alter his design, and did it over three times, adamantly refusing to give up the first prize to anyone else. When the jury, with myself presiding, rejected his design irrevocably and decided on one proposed by a group of artists headed by Alyoshin, the sculptor M. appealed to Vladimir Ilyich, complaining about the decision. Vladimir Ilyich took his appeal to heart, and rang me up to have a new jury convened. He told me he would come to see the designs presented by Alyoshin and the sculptor M. He liked Alyoshin's very much, and rejected the one by the sculptor M

That same year, on May Day, Alyoshin's group erected a small-scale model on the spot where

the monument to Marx was to stand. Vladimir Ilyich went there specially to see it. He walked round the monument several times, asked how big it was going to be, and finally gave his approval, saying to me however: "Anatoly Vasilyevich, be sure to tell the artist that the hair must be lifelike, so one would have the same impression of Karl Marx as one has from his better portraits, because there doesn't seem to be much likeness."

Once in 1918 Vladimir Ilyich called me in and spoke to me about the need to promote art as a means of agitation. He set out two plans he had. The first was to have revolutionary slogans inscribed on the walls of buildings, fences and other places where posters were usually hung. He suggested some of the slogans right then and there.

His second plan was to erect temporary plaster monuments to great revolutionaries both in Petrograd and Moscow, and to do it on an extremely large scale. Both cities readily agreed to implement Lenin's idea, and it was proposed that there should be an unveiling ceremony for each monument with a speech made about the revolutionary to whom it was dedicated, and that elucidating inscriptions should be made on the pedestal. Vladimir Ilyich called it "monumental propaganda".

In Petrograd this "monumental propaganda" was quite a success. The first such monument was Shervud's "Radishchev". A copy was put up in Moscow. Unfortunately, the Petrograd original fell to pieces and has not been renewed. In general, most of those Petrograd monuments

collapsed because they were made of such fragile material, and yet I remember some that were very good indeed: the busts of Garibaldi, Shevchenko, Dobrolyubov, Herzen, and a few others. Those made by leftist artists were worse. For instance, when the cubistically stylised head of Perovskaya was unveiled, some people actually jumped back in horror. The monument to Chernyshevsky too, I seem to remember, struck many as rather contrived. The best one was the monument to Lassalle* erected in front of the former City Duma where it stands to this day.** I believe it has since been cast in bronze. Another admirable monument was the standing figure of Karl Marx made by sculptor Matveyev. Unfortunately, it got broken, and in its place (near the Smolny) there is now a bronze head of Marx of a more or less conventional type with none of the originality of Matveyev's plastic interpretation.

In Moscow—the very place where Vladimir Ilyich could see them—the monuments were rather poor.

Altogether there were few satisfactory monuments in Moscow. The one to the poet Nikitin was perhaps better than the rest. I don't know if Vladimir Ilyich examined them very closely, but anyway he once said to me with displeasure that nothing had come of the monumental propaganda. I mentioned the Petrograd experience, at which he shook his head in doubt and said.

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* By Zelit—*A. L.* (The sculptor was Sinaisky and not Zelit, as mistakenly written by Lunacharsky—*Ed.*)

** These recollections were written in 1924—*Ed.*

"Do you mean to say that all the gifted are assembled in Petrograd and the giftless in Moscow?" It did seem strange, and I had no explanation to offer him.

He also had his doubts about Konenkov's memorial plaque. It did not seem particularly impressive to him. Konenkov himself, as a matter of fact, called this work of his, not without humour, a "mnimo-real"* plaque.

I also remember the artist Altman giving Vladimir Ilyich a portrait of Khalturin done in bas-relief. Vladimir Ilyich liked it very much but afterwards asked me if it wasn't a futurist piece. He disapproved of futurism in general. I was not present at the conversation he had with the students of the Higher Art Technical Studios at their hostel where he once came with Nadezhda Konstantinovna. I was told afterwards that big issues had been raised by the art students, "leftists" all of them, of course. Vladimir Ilyich had replied jocularly, making mild fun of them, but to them, too, he declared that he did not feel competent enough to go into a serious discussion on art. He found the young people themselves a very fine lot, and was delighted that they were communist-minded.

In the last period of his life Vladimir Ilyich rarely had a chance to indulge his interest in the arts. He went to the theatre several times, always to the Arts Theatre I believe, which he thought very highly of. Its shows invariably left a wonderful impression on him.

Vladimir Ilyich loved music. At one time some

* "Mnimo" means "pseudo" in Russian – *Tr.*

really good concerts were held in my house Chaliapin sang sometimes, Meichik, Romanovsky, the Stradivarius quartet, Koussevitsky and other musicians played for us. I often invited Vladimir Ilyich, but he was always busy. Once he told me frankly: "Of course, listening to music is very pleasant but, imagine, it upsets me. I take it very hard, somehow." I remember Comrade Tsyurupa, who managed to entice Vladimir Ilyich to one or two recitals given by the pianist Romanovsky in someone's house, telling me that Lenin had greatly enjoyed the music but had obviously felt disturbed.

More than once I had the task to prove to Vladimir Ilyich that the Bolshoi Theatre was costing us very little, relatively speaking, but still, on his insistence, a cut was made in the allocations He was guided by two considerations, one of which he explained at once· "It won't do to spend so much money on the upkeep of a theatre as sumptuous as the Bolshoi when we have none for the maintenance of the most ordinary schools in the villages." His other consideration he disclosed at a meeting when I disputed his attack on the Bolshoi Theatre and pointed to its obvious cultural importance. And then Vladimir Ilyich twinkled slyly and said: "And still it's a piece of purely landed-gentry's culture, and no one can dispute the fact."

It does not follow from this that Vladimir Ilyich was hostilely disposed to the culture of the past as a whole. It was the entire pompously courtly tone of the opera that seemed to him to have a specifically landed-gentry ring. But art of the past as such, Russian realism especially

(including the *peredvizhniki**), he held in high esteem.

Well, these are the factual data which I can offer from my recollections of Vladimir Ilyich. I repeat, Vladimir Ilyich never made guiding principles out of his aesthetical likes and dislikes.

Comrades who take an interest in art will remember the Central Committee's letter on questions of art which was aimed quite sharply against futurism.[72] I don't know the particulars, but I think that Vladimir Ilyich himself took a share in it. At that time he considered me either a champion of futurism or a zealous supporter of it, and that is probably why he did not consult me before the publication of the Central Committee's decision which, he thought, would correct my stand.

Vladimir Ilyich also disagreed with me rather sharply about the Proletcult. He even scolded me roundly once. Before I go on, I want it to be understood that he by no means denied the importance of workers' circles for the training of writers and painters from among the proletariat, but he was afraid that the Proletcult might attempt to work out a "proletarian science" in general, and a complete "proletarian culture". Firstly, he thought the task utterly untimely and

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* The name given to realist artists and sculptors associated with the Russian progressive democratic society "Association of Travelling Art Exhibitions" set up in 1870

The exhibitions arranged by the society in St Petersburg were subsequently moved to other major cities of Russia The society existed till 1922, having organised 48 large exhibitions —*Ed*

unfeasible; secondly, he believed that these new-fangled notions, which were naturally premature, would fence off the workers from study and the assimilation of existing science and culture; and thirdly, he was afraid, and not without reason apparently, that some political deviation would ensconce itself in the Proletcult. He strongly disapproved, for example, of the big role then played in the Proletcult by A A. Bogdanov.

When the Proletcult had its congress in October 1920, Vladimir Ilyich told me to go there and point out resolutely that this organisation had to work under the guidance of the People's Commissariat for Education and to consider itself one of its institutes. In short, Vladimir Ilyich wanted us to draw the Proletcult closer to the state, and at the same time he took steps to draw it closer to the Party as well. The speech I addressed to the congress was somewhat evasive and conciliatory in wording. And as passed on to Vladimir Ilyich it sounded even softer. He called me in and gave me a proper dressing down. Later, the Proletcult was reorganised according to Lenin's instructions.

The new art and literary formations which emerged during the revolution did not for the most part attract Lenin's notice. He had no time to busy himself with them. Still I'll say that he definitely did not like Mayakovsky's "A Hundred and Fifty Million". He thought it too contrived.* One can't help feeling sorry that he was

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* However, a short poem by the same Mayakovsky about red-tape Lenin found so amusing that he occasionally repeated some of the lines.—*A L.*

unable to give his opinion of the other, later and more mature turns taken by literature in the revolutionary direction.

And everyone knows how enormously interested Vladimir Ilyich was in the cinema.

A. V. Lunacharsky, *Recollections of Lenin* Partizdat (Russ. ed.), 1933, pp. 46-51

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In a private conversation, when I asked Lenin for money to support our experimental theatres because they were new and revolutionary, he replied: "Let these experimental theatres draw on their enthusiasm while these hungry times last. It is absolutely imperative for us to do everything in our power not to let the pillars of our culture collapse, for the proletariat would never forgive us that." Lenin's standpoint was that before anything else we had to see to it that our museums, in which enormous treasures were kept, did not fall to pieces, and that our major specialists did not weaken from hunger and flee abroad. He thought it would be less of a sin if we waited a little before advancing the problems of the experimental youth theatres to the fore.

Lenin on Culture and Art (Collection of Articles) Izogiz (Russ. ed.) 1938, p. 310

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...In 1918 members of the Proletcult launched a strong attack against the Alexandrinsky

Theatre. I myself was closely connected with the organisation, and finally I became somewhat perplexed by their insistent demands to put an end to the "nidus of reactionary art".

I decided to seek counsel from Vladimir Ilyich himself.

...And so, when I came to see him in his office—I don't remember the exact date but anyway it was during the 1918-19 season—I told him that I intended making every effort to preserve the country's best theatres. To this I added: "They're still playing their old repertoire, of course, but we'll quickly purge it of any filth. Audiences, and proletarian audiences in particular, attend their shows readily. Time itself, as well as these audiences, will eventually compel even the most conservative theatres to change. And I think this change will come about quite soon. In my opinion a radical breaking up would be dangerous here: we have no replacements in this field as yet. And the new that will develop may snap that cultural thread. After all, while taking it for granted that the music of the near future after revolution's victory will be both proletarian and socialist, we can't, after all, imagine that conservatoires and music schools can be closed down and the old 'feudal-bourgeois' instruments and sheet music be burnt."

Vladimir Ilyich listened attentively to what I had to say and then replied that this was the line to adhere to, but that I must also remember to support the new that was born under the influence of the revolution. Never mind if it was weak at first: it must not be judged from the aesthetic point of view alone, otherwise the

old, more mature art would retard the development of the new, and though this old art itself would undergo a change the process would be the slower the less vigorously it was spurred on by the competition offered by its young rival.

I hastened to assure Vladimir Ilyich that I would be careful not to make that mistake, and said. "Only we must not allow the maniacs and charlatans who, in rather great numbers, are trying to board our ship to make use of our own means and play a role for which they are not cast and which would do us harm."

To this Vladimir Ilyich made a reply which I remember word for word. "You are profoundly right about the maniacs and charlatans. A class that has conquered, and moreover a class whose own intelligentsia is as yet a quantitatively small force, inevitably falls victim to these elements unless it guards itself against them. It is by way of being both an inevitable result and even a sign of victory," Lenin added, laughing.

"Well then, to sum up," I said. "Everything that is more or less sound in old art is to be safeguarded. Art—I do not mean museum pieces, but effective art such as the theatre, literature and music—is to be influenced, but not crudely, to complete its evolution as quickly as possible to meet the new requirements. New trends are to be treated with discrimination. They must not be allowed to seize the field by mere aggression, but are to be given an opportunity to win prominence by real artistic merits. In this respect they are to be given every possible assistance."

To this Lenin said: "This puts it rather precisely, I think. Now try to bring it home to

our audiences, and to people in general for that matter, in your public speeches and articles."

"Can I quote you?" I asked.

"No, why? I don't claim to be an expert in the arts. Since you're a People's Commissar you ought to be enough of an authority yourself."

And on that our conversation ended.

A V Lunacharsky, "For the Centenary of the Alexandrinsky Theatre" In the book Konstantin Derzhavin, *Epochs of the Alexandrinsky Theatre*, Lengikhl (Russ ed), 1932, pp IX-XI

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Is there anyone who does not know that Lenin ascribed a great importance to the cultural revolution? He spoke about it with especial frequency already after the October Revolution. He spoke about it at congresses dealing with different branches of public education and also in his famous address made to the Young Communist League; he wrote about it in his articles, returning again and again to the cultural tasks of the revolution, and devoting much attention to this theme in those last pages ever written by his own hand.

And Lenin was by no means interested merely in the forms which socialist culture would assume in the years when victory will have been won on the political and economic fronts and the new life, which Marx called "life worthy of man" and in relation to which he considered the entire history of mankind no more than a pre-

paratory period, will have unfolded in all its splendour.

Although he never denied "daydreams" the right to existence, Lenin did not like to let them jump too far ahead. He was wont to reiterate with a smile when someone asked him a question about something in the distant future. "Well, you know, people will be very clever then and they'll solve all these problems splendidly, so let's you and I come back to problems that have no one except us to solve them."

Culture interested Lenin not as the crowning point of political and economic gains in the first place, although he realised perfectly well that it is socialist culture and the socialist way of life that in the eyes of every fighter give a moral meaning to the sacrifices and efforts which history demands so much of before a classless society can be established on earth.

In the first place Lenin was interested in that particular culture which is a necessary prerequisite for the attainment of a consummate socialist culture, for the stabilisation of political gains and the successful building up of a socialist economy in our country.

Lenin used to say most emphatically that we would have found it much easier to struggle and build if we had, after overthrowing the monarchy and the ruling classes, inherited a more developed bourgeois culture.

He said repeatedly that this bourgeois culture would facilitate and speed up the real and complete attainment of socialism by the proletariat of western countries after victory.

The Asiatic gloom that hung over our country

right up to the victory of the proletariat in the October Revolution and which we have by no means eliminated completely even by this time, always appeared to Lenin as the most substantial hindrance to our successful and rapid advance along the road to socialism.

With us industrialisation has always meant and still means the simultaneous building up of a socialist economy and the attainment of that particular level of general and technical development without which socialism would remain a fanciful dream.

This leaps to the eye still more sharply when we review our rural and agricultural economic policy in general. What enormous economic changes have to be made in the countryside in order to create a soil in which consummate socialist forms of economy and life would thrive.

Ilyich was also concerned about the most elementary culture.

But anyone who drew from all this the simplified and shallow conclusion that Lenin was a "culture fiend" would be making a grave mistake.

But didn't he say—somebody might ask—Soviet power plus electricity plus the culture of the masses?

He did. But if he were a "culture fiend" he would obviously have said: first literacy, then electrification, and then perhaps, little by little and in due course, different forms of freedoms and organisation up to and including Soviet power.

And that is something he never said, and what is more he waged a constant struggle

against those who did, pelleting them with sharp and scathingly sarcastic remarks.

Why did literacy and electrification acquire their real meaning for Lenin only *after* Soviet power?

Electrification, apparently, for the very reason that it was no longer bourgeois electrification. Naturally, bourgeois electrification would not have come amiss either if we had found on the day of revolution's victory one or another of the fruits it had borne, but anyway it would have had an entirely different meaning. Being a major power factor it would have also been a factor of cruel exploitation of man by man, and—given certain conditions—might have even signified a consolidation of this exploitation and made another weapon for the ruling class.

The literacy which the masses receive prior to a revolution plays almost exactly the same role. Needless to say, it would not be a bad thing to find the people highly literate on the day of revolution's victory, but still theirs would not be the same literacy as ours. *That* literacy had been given the workers and poor peasants the better to exploit them for one thing, and the better to deceive them, for another. We see how anything but unsuccessfully (though the success is temporary, of course) the Mensheviks, in the footsteps of and side by side with the priests, use this "literacy" to retard the genuine development of the working people's self-awareness.

After the October Revolution, culture and the most elementary literacy assumed in Ilyich's

eyes an entirely different meaning and appeared to him in quite different forms.

He spoke ironically, of course, of those visionaries and hurry-scurries who imagined that proletarian culture was something you could fire out of a pistol like a conjurer, presenting the proletariat and the peasantry with a brand new culture where everything—from the first letter of the alphabet to locomotives and guns—would be quite unlike the old.

And no guarantees given that the new letters would be readable, the new locomotives would take us where we want to go, and the new proletarian models of guns would be a match for the bourgeois enemy artillery.

So, how could Ilyich help getting angry and ridiculing them when he heard notions as fantastic as the ones I have caricatured here?

No, Ilyich knew that we had to get down to serious and assiduous study in order to extract from bourgeois wisdom and its technical knowledge everything that might come in useful to us and help us to defeat the bourgeoisie and build our own world.

At the same time he knew very well, however, that we could not learn *all* we needed from the bourgeoisie. He knew that we had our own concepts, only ours, repudiated, condemned and cursed by the bourgeoisie. We have our own class truths, our new revolutionary approach to the world, to knowledge, to history, to the present and the future.

And Lenin insisted, speaking from this point of view, that our literacy itself, from the very first word read by a child or his illiterate mother

learning to read and write in class for illiterate adults, would obviously be quite different, infused with a different spirit and guiding the mind in a different direction.

More than that, Lenin taught us that our methods of study and self-study must also be different. Not only must our methods be expurgated of all the falsehood and deceit, all the voluntary or involuntary prejudices and absurdities of the bourgeoisie, but the very mastery of the subjects must be achieved not in the bourgeois-bookish manner but in profound connection with our socialist everyday experience.

I suppose a progressive-minded bourgeois teacher could also say: "Study as you work, and work as you study." But the difference is that with Lenin this work is nothing more nor less than an element of *socialist* practice, and practice and study are inseparable components of the socialism that has been growing up in our country since the October Revolution.

Indeed, without increasing literacy, without study, there can be no cementing of our political positions by the lofty and clear-cut class consciousness of the proletarian and peasant masses.

Indeed, without literacy, without study, there can be no rapid development of industry, nor can the individualistic rural countryside be transformed into a collective-farm land.

But not for a second, if you do not want to make a great mistake, must this literacy and this study be divorced from our political struggle, from our economic struggle, our industrialisation and collectivisation.

It is as obvious now as it was in the very first months following the revolution from what Lenin said then.

But time marches on And the "current moment" flows on boisterously. We have never yet seen it damage any principles of ours, but with its every turn the live river of time either confronts us with new problems or poses old problems in a new way.

And if we were to ask ourselves now which questions, dealt with in Lenin's great teaching on the cultural aspect of our socialist revolution, have advanced to the very forefront, and which of the elements, inherent in Leninism before as well, of course, have assumed paramount importance, we would have to answer that two questions have borne down on us with unheard-of strength and insistence: *the question of cadres and the question of the aggravation of the class struggle in the sphere of culture.*

But was there ever a time when Lenin did not feel concern for our cadres? Did not we hear from his own lips words of wise advice on how to take care of the old cadres and how to use them for the development of new ones? Did we not also hear from him that we must make speed and open the whole educational complex, including high schools, for the working-class and peasant youth in order to build up new, quantitatively and qualitatively adequate cadres of our own intelligentsia as quickly as possible? Did we not hear from him how carefully we must rear them so they would not make a vainglorious display of their knowledge, so they would not succumb to alien influence, so they would

remember that they were bone of the bone and flesh of the flesh of the working people and had to be an example to others for their public-spirited behaviour and their selfless dedication?

All this we heard from Lenin.

But time rushes on. The scale of our construction is enormous, and in view of our expanding industry and increasing technical equipment the problem facing us now is to see that Man does not lag behind, that he does not fall short of the complexity and perfection of the machines and the techniques and does not appear something of a semi-savage as far as technical skill is concerned, attempting with inept hands to master a "helpmate" he cannot intelligently control.

The resolutions on cadres, adopted by the last plenary session of the Central Committee, have a profoundly Lenin-like ring But anyone can see that it will take an all but superhuman effort on the part of the organisers, the professors and the youth to carry out this titanic task, so boldly and correctly outlined for us by the Central Committee, in the allotted time.

Lenin warned us that in the sphere of culture (and everyday life!) the enemy would be especially strong, "tricky, artful and tenacious".

There was a time when we fought. We don't forswear fighting even now. But as never before we now need to dislodge the enemy from *cultural* positions. And we must not stop at seizing command heights alone, we must advance in an extended line and win more and more enemy territory.

Within the country, the kulak and all that

has spread in a large circle around him, including some academician of European fame and grey-haired dignity, a jaundiced writer who artfully smears our gates with tar under the pretext of fidelity to artistic truth, a teacher who spreads anti-Semitic jokes on the sly, and a wretch who has sold his last pair of pants for booze and rubs with the crowd in the marketplaces wheezing malicious drivel—all of them are trying to conserve themselves and each other in their old positions and to propagate their poison, mesmerising as far as they are able both the vacillating middle peasants, the shaky sections of white collar workers, and the morally unripe and not yet settled youth.

At a glance you sometimes see only a picture in blue or orange before you, but on close inspection it turns out to be—very often without even the author being fully aware of it—a blob of viscid, malodorous, asphyxiating gas of anti-proletarian culture.

Vigilance of the highest order is needed here. An ability to purge not just energetically but delicately as well. We must not and cannot be wasteful, we've got to be able to tell competently which gangrenous limbs have to be amputated and burnt, where a cure can be effected, and what we've got to tolerate whether we like it or not until we can replace it with something new and of our own. We must know whom to support, whom to set right, and whom to give a timely scolding to.

Vigilant caution should stand on guard of our cultural creativity in all spheres of Marxist philosophy and methodology—in social sciences,

in the reform of the natural sciences, theoretical and practical pedagogy, art criticism, and last but not least in the form of our own products of artistic creativity which illustrate our ideas and feelings and which capture the imagination of the rapidly developing masses

In the onward march of our construction we have now come close to moments of such solemnity which Ilyich had only pictured in his passionate, completely earthbound and practical "dream", envisaging them in the not too distant future which, however, the greatest revolutionary the world has ever known did not live to see.

We are beginning to build our socialist towns! We are beginning to build our agricultural cities! We are beginning to build up that completely renovated environment in which people will find it so easy to change, to get away from the clutches of old Adam and become new men.

By changing things around it in the process of its revolutionary struggle, the proletariat will also change itself, taught Marx and Lenin.

The proletariat has changed things around it in many ways. It has itself changed a great deal too. It has now matured sufficiently to embark on a perfectly systematic creation of a genuinely socialist way of life.

How gladly our leader would have responded to this! We have to admit it: speaking of personalities, the principal builder of every new socialist town, of that highly finished crystal of socialist culture, will anyway always be Lenin—Vladimir Ilyich Lenin

A V Lunacharsky "Lenin on Culture", *Pravda*, January 21, 1930

NOTES

[1] *Narodnik*—a follower of Narodism, a political trend in Russia, which arose in the seventies of the nineteenth century. The Narodniks maintained that capitalism in Russia was a "chance" phenomenon and accordingly denied the leading role of the working class in the revolutionary movement They regarded the peasantry as the main revolutionary force and the village commune as the nucleus of the future socialist society, but their socialism had nothing to do with scientific socialism because it disregarded objective laws of social development

The Narodniks proceeded from their fallacious view of the role of the class struggle in the development of history; they held that history was made by outstanding personalities, the "heroes", followed passively by the people, the "crowd". In the struggle against tsarism they turned to individual acts of terror. p 7

[2] The "*disciples*"—the term used in the 1890s to designate the followers of Marx and Engels p 7

[3] *Vekhi* (Landmarks)—a collection of articles by prominent Cadet publicists, representatives of the counter-revolutionary liberal bourgeoisie: N. A. Berdayev, S. N. Bulgakov, M. O. Herschensohn, A S Izgoyev, B. A Kistyakovsky, P. B Struve and S. L. Frank; it appeared in Moscow in the spring of 1909. In their articles on the Russian intelligentsia, the Vekhists tried to malign the revolutionary-democratic traditions of the liberation movement in Russia, the views and work of V G Belinsky, N. A Dobrolyubov, N G Cher-

nyshevsky and D I Pisarev They vilified the 1905 revolutionary movement and thanked the tsarist government for having saved the bourgeoisie from "the fury of the people" "with its bayonets and jails" p 10

[4] *Cadets*—members of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, the leading party of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie in Russia It was set up in October 1905 and consisted of representatives of the bourgeoisie, landowners and bourgeois intellectuals

To deceive the working people the Cadets called themselves "the party of people's freedom", but actually they went no further than to demand a constitutional monarchy

During World War I (1914-18) the Cadets actively supported the tsarist government's expansionist foreign policy, and when the February bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1917 began they tried to save the monarchy After the victory of the October Socialist Revolution they became the avowed enemies of Soviet power and took part in all armed counter-revolutionary action and the campaigns of the interventionists While living abroad after the defeat of the interventionists and whiteguards they continued their anti-Soviet, counter-revolutionary activities p 10

[5] *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* (Moscow Recorder)—a daily newspaper that started publication in 1756, from the 1860s, it was the mouthpiece of the most reactionary sections among the landowners and clergy, in 1905 *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* became an organ of the Black Hundreds, it was suppressed soon after the October Socialist Revolution in 1917 p 13

[6] Belinsky wrote this letter in Salzbrunn on July 15, 1847 after the publication by Gogol of his "Selected Passages from Correspondence with the Friends". Belinsky denounced the author for his praise of the autocratic feudal system p 13

[7] *Duma, the State Duma*—representative assembly in tsarist Russia convened as a result of the 1905-07 revolution Formally a legislative body, it actually had

no effective power The elections to the Duma were neither direct, equal, nor universal The electoral rights of the working people like those of the non-Russian nationalities inhabiting the country were considerably restricted Most of the workers and peasants were not entitled to vote at all

The First Duma (April-July 1906) and the Second Duma (February-June 1907) were dissolved by the tsarist government The Third (1907-12) and Fourth (1912-17) Dumas were composed mainly of reactionary deputies, advocates of tsarist autocracy. p 17

[8] *Trudoviks* (the Trudovik group)—a group of petty-bourgeois democrats in the State Dumas of Russia consisting of peasants and intellectuals of Narodnik leanings It was formed in April 1906 among the peasant deputies to the First Duma In the Duma the Trudoviks vacillated between the policies of the Cadets and the Social-Democrats p. 18

[9] The "*four-point electoral system*"—designation of the democratic electoral system, which includes four democratic demands universal, equal, direct suffrage and secret ballot p 18

[10] *Novoye Vremya* (New Times)—a daily published in St Petersburg from 1868 to 1917 It was moderately liberal at the outset, but after 1876, when it came under the editorship of A. S Suvorin, it became the organ of reactionary circles of the nobility and bureaucracy After 1905 *Novoye Vremya* became a mouthpiece of the Black Hundreds p 18

[11] *The June 3 Constitution*—an electoral law issued by the tsarist government at the same time as the Second Duma (1907) was dissolved. This was a gross violation of the Manifesto of October 17, 1905 and the Fundamental Law of 1906 by which it had been decreed that no laws could be passed by the government without approval by the Duma

The new electoral law considerably increased the representation of the landowners and the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie in the Duma and greatly curtailed the number of peasants' and workers' repre-

sentatives small as it already was anyway. It took away electoral rights from a larger section of the population of the Asian part of Russia than hitherto and halved the Polish and Caucasian representation The Third Duma, which was elected on the basis of this law and met in November 1907, was a Black-Hundred-Octobrist institution. p. 19

12 With the words "Enrich yourselves, gentlemen, and you will become electors" Guizot, head of the French Government from 1840 to 1848, replied to the demand to lower the high property qualifications. The words that the government "put its stake on the healthy and strong, and not on the crippled and drunk" belong to P. A Stolypin. p 19

13 This refers to the tsar's *Manifesto of October 17, 1905* issued at the height of the all-Russia October political strike. A concession wrested from the tsar by the revolution, this Manifesto promised "civil liberties" and a "legislative" Duma. The tsarist government wanted to play for time, split the revolutionary forces, foil the all-Russia strike and suppress the revolution The Bolsheviks exposed this political manoeuvre of the autocratic government p. 20

14 *Octobrists*—members of the Union of October 17th founded in Russia after the promulgation of the tsar's Manifesto of October 17, 1905 It was a counter-revolutionary party representing and upholding the interests of the top bourgeoisie and the landowners who ran their farms on capitalist lines The Octobrists gave full support to the tsarist government's home and foreign policies. p 20

15 On August 6 (19), 1905 the tsar's Manifesto was published instituting the State Duma The Bulygin Duma derived its name from A. G. Bulygin, Minister of the Interior, who had been instructed by the tsar to draft the law for its convocation. Under this law the Duma had no legislative rights and could only discuss certain questions in the capacity of an advisory body to the tsar. The Bolsheviks called on the workers and peasants actively to boycott the Bulygin Duma. The

elections to this Duma were not carried through because the general political strike of October 1905 and the mounting wave of revolution swept the Bulygin Duma away before it was convened. p 21

[16] This refers to the visit by a group of Duma members to Britain P. N. Milyukov, the leader of the Cadet Party and a member of the delegation, declared at a luncheon given by the Lord Mayor of London that "so long as there is in Russia a legislative chamber which controls the budget the Russian opposition will remain the Opposition of His Majesty and not to His Majesty." p 22

[17] *Otzovism* (from the Russian word "otozvat" meaning "to recall")—an opportunist trend which appeared within the Bolshevik movement in 1908. Under cover of revolutionary phrases the otzovists demanded the recall of the Social-Democrat deputies from the Third Duma and cessation of work in legal organisations They held that in the conditions of reaction the Party should conduct only illegal activities, therefore the otzovists refused to work in the Duma, the trade unions, co-operative societies and other mass legal and semi-legal organisations. The otzovists caused immense damage to the Party. Their policy tended to divorce the Party from the masses and turn it into a sectarian organisation incapable of mustering forces for a new upsurge of revolutionary strength. p. 23

[18] *The Black Hundreds*—monarchist gangs organised by the tsarist police to fight the revolutionary movement. They assassinated revolutionaries, attacked progressive intellectuals and organised Jewish pogroms. p. 23

[19] This refers to the Third Duma (1907-12). p 24

[20] *Machists*—adherents of Machism or empirio-criticism, a reactionary, subjective-idealistic philosophical trend widespread in Western Europe at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. It was founded by Ernst Mach, an Austrian physicist and philosopher, and Richard Avenarius, a German philosopher. Machism was all the more dangerous for the

working class since it professed to oppose idealism and uphold contemporary natural sciences, which gave it a "scientific" air. In Russia, in the years of reaction some Social-Democrat intellectuals came under the influence of this bourgeois philosophy. It was particularly widespread among Menshevik intellectuals (N. Valentinov, P. Yushkevich and others). Some Bolshevik men of letters (V. Bazarov, A Bogdanov and others) took up a Machist position. Under the pretext of developing Marxism, the Russian Machists in fact tried to revise the fundamental ideas of Marxist theory. In his book *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* V. I. Lenin revealed the reactionary essence of Machism, defended Marxism against revisionist attacks and supplied a comprehensive interpretation of the significance of dialectical and historical materialism under the new historical conditions p. 25

[21] *Vperyodists, The Vperyod group*—an anti Party group of otzovists, ultimatumists and god-builders, organised on the initiative of A. Bogdanov and G. Alexinsky in December 1909; the group had a newspaper of its own called *Vperyod* (Forward).

Since it had no support among the workers, the group disintegrated over the two years, 1913 and 1914, its existence formally came to an end after the bourgeois-democratic revolution of February 1917 p. 27

[22] *Russkaya Mysl* (Russian Thought)—a literary and political monthly periodical published in Moscow from 1880 to 1918, until 1905 it was of liberal-Narodnik leanings After the 1905 revolution *Russkaya Mysl* became the organ of the Right wing of the Constitutional-Democratic Party and was edited by Pyotr Struve. The journal preached nationalism, Vekhism, clericalism and supported the preservation of the landed estates. p 29

[23] Lenin is quoting from Nekrasov's poem "Who Can Be Happy in Russia?" p. 30

[24] Lenin is quoting from Nekrasov's poem "To the Unknown Friend Who Has Sent Me the Poem 'It Cannot Be' ". p. 32

[25] The expression is from Saltykov-Shchedrin's satirical fairy-tale "The Liberal". p. 32

[26] *Neo-Kantianism*—a reactionary trend in bourgeois philosophy preaching subjective idealism under the banner of a revival of Kant's philosophy p. 33

[27] This article was written by Lenin for the thirtieth anniversary of Marx's death p. 34

[28] See F. Engels, "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy" and *Anti-Dühring*, and K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* p. 36

[29] *Bundist*—member of the Bund, an abridged name of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Lithuania, Poland and Russia, organised in 1897, it was an association mainly of semi-proletarian Jewish artisans in the western regions of Russia. The Bund brought nationalism and separatism into the Russian working-class movement.

In March 1921 the Bund was dissolved by common consent p. 43

[30] *Council of the United Nobility*—a counter-revolutionary organisation of the landowners that existed from May 1906 to October 1917. Its main object was to protect the autocratic system, the big landed estates and the privileges of the nobility. p. 47

[31] *Decembrists*—Russian revolutionaries from among the nobility, who in December 1825 organised a revolt against the Russian autocratic system. The revolt was put down by the tsar's troops and its participants were either executed or sentenced to penal servitude in Siberia. p. 48

[32] *Commoners (raznochintsi)*—Russian intellectuals drawn from the petty townsfolk, the clergy, the merchants and peasantry, as distinct from those coming from the nobility. p. 48

[33] A quotation from Chernyshevsky's novel *The Prologue* p. 48

[34] See F Engels, *Flüchtlingsliteratur* p. 49

[35] This was the name given by Marx and Engels to the followers of Lassalle, a petty-bourgeois German socialist, because they preached the idea of introducing socialism in Prussia with the help of the Prussian Royal Government Having received from Chancellor Bismarck, head of this government, a false promise to carry out certain reforms, the Lassalleans ceased fighting against the Prussian monarchy and the landed aristocracy Marx and Engels sharply criticised the Lassalleans for their betrayal of the working-class cause p. 50

[36] *Junkers*—the landed nobility of Prussia p. 50

[37] The reference is to World War I (1914-18) p 53

[38] Lenin is giving an account of the *Introduction to Borkheim's Pamphlet "In Memory of the German Arch-Patriots of 1806-1807"* written by Engels on December 15, 1887 p 54

[39] See F Engels, *The Peasant Question in France and Germany* (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol II, Moscow, 1962, p 435) p 58

[40] See K. Marx, *The Civil War in France* (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1962, pp 520-21) p 60

[41] See F. Engels, *The Peasant Question in France and Germany* (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol II, Moscow, 1962, p 433) p. 60

[42] *The Brest Peace* was signed at Brest-Litovsk in March 1918 between Soviet Russia and Germany on terms exceedingly harsh for Russia The Soviet Government was obliged to sign it because the old tsarist army had fallen to pieces and the Red Army was only just

coming into being The Brest Treaty gave Soviet Russia the respite it needed, enabled it to interrupt military operations for a time and gather forces in order to rout the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and interventionists in the Civil War that began soon afterwards

After the revolution in Germany (November 1918) the Brest Peace was declared null and void. p 61

43 *Mensheviks*—an opportunist trend in the Russian Social-Democratic movement

During the elections to the central organs at the Second Congress of the R S D L P. in 1903 the revolutionary Social Democrats headed by Lenin gained a majority (the Russian for it is *bolshinstvo*, hence the name 'Bolsheviks"), and the opportunists found themselves in the minority (*menshinstvo*, hence the name 'Mensheviks")

In the days of the 1905-07 revolution the Mensheviks opposed the working-class hegemony in the revolution, the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, and insisted on co-operation with the liberal bourgeoisie, which, in their opinion, should be placed at the head of the revolution In the years of reaction, following this revolution, most of the Mensheviks became liquidators they demanded that the illegal revolutionary party of the working class should be liquidated After the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February 1917 the Mensheviks entered the bourgeois Provisional Government, and supported its imperialist policies, they actively fought against the socialist revolution then in preparation After the October Socialist Revolution of 1917 the Menshevik group developed into an openly counter-revolutionary party which organised and took part in all the various plots and revolts directed at the overthrow of Soviet power

Socialist-Revolutionaries (S R s)—members of a petty-bourgeois party that came into being in Russia at the end of 1901 and the beginning of 1902 as a result of a union of various Narodnik groups and circles The S R s failed to acknowledge class distinctions between the proletariat and the petty proprietors, glossed over the class differentiation and antagonisms

within the peasantry (between the poor peasants and kulaks), and refused to recognise the leading role of the proletariat in the revolutionary movement

After the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution of February 1917, the S R s, together with the Mensheviks and Constitutional Democrats, became the mainstay of the counter-revolutionary Provisional Government of the bourgeoisie and landowners, of which the S R leaders (Kerensky, Avksentyev and Chernov) were members

Late in November 1917 the Left wing of the S R Party formed an independent party of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. Endeavouring to preserve their influence among the peasants, the Left S R s formally recognised Soviet power and entered into an agreement with the Bolsheviks, but soon they started a struggle against the Soviet government

In the years of foreign military intervention and the Civil War the S R s carried on counter-revolutionary subversive activity, actively supported the interventionists and whiteguards participated in counter-revolutionary plots and organised terroristic acts against leaders of the Soviet state and the Communist Party After the Civil War ended the S R s continued their anti-Soviet activities both within the country and within the camp of the whiteguard emigrés p 72

[44] *Spartacists* – members of a revolutionary organisation of Left German Social-Democrats The Spartacus group was formed in the early days of World War I by Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg Franz Mehring Clara Zetkin Julian Marchlewski, Leon Jogiches (Tyszka) and Wilhelm Pieck The Spartacists conducted revolutionary propaganda among the people, organised mass anti-war demonstrations, directed strikes and exposed the imperialist character of the war and the treachery of the opportunist Social-Democrat leaders

In April 1917 they entered the Centrist Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany as an organisationally autonomous body In November 1918, during the revolution in Germany, the Spartacists organised the Spartacus League and after publishing their own programme on December 14, 1918, broke with the

"Independents" At its inaugural congress held from December 30, 1918 to January 1, 1919—the Spartacus League founded the Communist Party of Germany
p 76

[45] The *Novaya Zhizn* people—a group of Mensheviks formed around the newspaper *Novaya Zhizn* (New Life) published in Petrograd from April 1917 to July 1918

The group consisted mainly of the Menshevik followers of Martov, who called themselves internationalists They met the October Socialist Revolution with hostility, except for a few among them who joined the Bolsheviks
p 80

[46] Lenin is referring to the anti-Marxist views that were spread in the guise of "proletarian culture" by the members of the so-called *Proletcult* (Proletarian Culture Organisation) Formed in September 1917 as an independent workers' organisation, the Proletcult, headed by A A. Bogdanov and his followers, continued even after the October Revolution to uphold its extreme "independence" of the proletarian state As a result, bourgeois intellectuals wormed their way into the organisation and began to dominate it The members of the Proletcult in effect rejected the cultural legacy of the past, strove to fence themselves off from the cultural and educational work among the masses and to create a special "proletarian culture" by 'laboratory methods" While paying lip service to Marxism Bogdanov, the main Proletcult ideologist, advocated subjective idealism and Machism The Proletcult was not a homogeneous organisation In addition to the bourgeois intellectuals who constituted the leadership of many of its organisations, there were also young workers who sincerely wished to promote the cultural development of the Soviet state The Proletcult organisations flourished in 1919 but early in the twenties they went into decline, and in 1932 the Proletcult finally ceased to exist In his draft resolution on "Proletarian Culture" (see pp 152-54 of the present book) and in a number of other works V. I Lenin sharply criticised the erroneous principles of the Proletcult
p. 83

[47] This refers to a decree on "The Mobilisation of the Literate and the Organisation of Propaganda of the Soviet System" issued by the Council of People's Commissars on December 10, 1918 and published in *Izvestia VTsIK* No 272 The decree proposed to register the entire literate population and select public speakers from among them with a view to organising them into groups which must "first inform the illiterate population of all the measures by the government and, secondly, promote the political education of the entire population in general" p 84

[48] Lenin is referring to the plot to surrender Petrograd led by the so-called National Centre, a counter-revolutionary organisation uniting the activities of a number of anti-Soviet spy and espionage groups In the early hours of June 13, 1919, the conspirators started up a revolt at the Krasnaya Gorka (Red Hill), Serava Loshad (Grey Horse) and Obruchev forts By capturing the Krasnaya Gorka fort, an important approach to Petrograd, they hoped to weaken the Kronstadt fortifications and, by co-ordinating the revolt with the general offensive at the front, to seize Petrograd The revolt was suppressed early in the morning of June 16 p 98

[49] This refers to the Second (Berne) International founded at a conference of Socialist parties in Berne in February 1919 by the leaders of the West European Socialist Parties, in place of the Second International that ceased to exist in the early days of World War I

The Berne International in fact played the role of lackey to the international bourgeoisie p 100

[50] *The battle of Sadowa* (a village, now a town in the Hradec Kralove region of Czechoslovakia) took place on July 3 1866 This battle which ended in Prussia's complete victory and Austria's defeat settled the outcome of the Austro Prussian war p 105

[51] This Party programme was adopted at the Eighth Congress of the R C P (B) p 110

[52] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol I, Moscow, 1959, p 302
p 111

[53] By its decree of March 16, 1919, the Council of People's Commissars amalgamated the consumers' cooperatives and reorganised them into a single distributing body named the "Consumers' Commune" This name led to a misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the decree in some districts In view of this, the All Russia Central Executive Committee, while approving the decree, in its resolution, changed the name from "Consumers' Commune" to "Consumers' Society", a name with which the people were already familiar
p 116

[54] See Note 46
p 124

[55] The draft resolution "On Proletarian Culture" was drawn up by Lenin for the First All-Russia Congress of the Proletcult organisation held in Moscow from October 5 to 12, 1920
p 152

[56] This document was written by Lenin at a session of the Political Bureau on October 9, 1920, it discussed the question of drawing up a resolution for the Proletcult congress Here Lenin reproduced the main propositions of his draft resolution on proletarian culture written on October 8 (see pp 152-54 of the present book)
p 155

[57] *The All-Russia Conference of Political Education Workers of Gubernia and Uyezd Education Departments* was held in Moscow from November 2 to 8, 1920 The main question discussed was the establishment of the Republic's Chief Committee for Political Education (Glavpolitprosvet) A V. Lunacharsky made the opening speech, in which he discussed the political education work The Conference also heard a report by N K Krupskaya on the "Current Plan for the Work of the Chief Committee for Political Education" and Y. A Litkens's report on the "Organisation of Local Political Education Departments"

Lenin delivered his speech at the third session of

the Conference (on the second day of the proceedings), after Krupskaya's report p 156

[58] The decree of the Council of People's Commissars "On the Republic's Chief Committee for Political Education", drawn up on Lenin's instructions, was signed by Lenin on November 12, 1920, and published in the newspaper *Izvestia VTsIK* No 263 on November 23, 1920 p 156

[59] *The Constituent Assembly* was convened by the Soviet Government on January 5, 1918 The elections had been held in the main prior to the October Socialist Revolution, and the Assembly's composition reflected the stage in the country's development, already passed, when the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Constitutional-Democrats had been in power This gave rise to a big gulf between the will of the majority of the people which found its expression in the establishment of Soviet power and in its decrees and the policy pursued by the parties of the S R s, Mensheviks and Cadets in the Constituent Assembly which upheld the interests of the bourgeoisie and kulaks The Constituent Assembly refused to discuss the "Declaration of the Rights of the Working and Exploited People" proposed by the Bolsheviks and to approve the decrees on peace, land and the transfer of power to the Soviets adopted by the Second Congress of Soviets

After reading the 'Declaration", the Bolsheviks left the Constituent Assembly which had demonstrated its hostile attitude to the working people's interests By a decree of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on January 6, 1918, the Constituent Assembly was dissolved p 173

[60] *The Two-and-a-Half International* (official name—International Association of Socialist Parties)—an international organisation of Centrist Socialist Parties and groups which, under pressure from the revolutionary-minded masses, withdrew from the Second International It was formed at a conference in Vienna in February 1921. While making a show of criticising the Second International, the leaders of the Two-and-a-Half International in fact pursued an opportunist,

disrupting policy on all the major questions connected with the working-class movement and sought to utilise this association to counteract the growing Communist influence among the workers

In May 1923 the Second and the Two-and-a-Half International united into the so-called Socialist Labour International p 175

61 *The Second International*—an international association of Socialist Parties founded in 1889 With the outbreak of World War I (1914-18) the leaders of the Second International betrayed the socialist cause and went over to the side of their imperialist governments, thus the Second International collapsed The Left-wing parties and groups, former members of the Second International, joined the Communist (Third) International founded in Moscow in 1919 The Second International was reinaugurated at a conference in Berne (Switzerland) in 1919, it included parties representing only the Right, opportunist wing of the socialist movement p 178

62 *The New Economic Policy* (NEP)—an economic policy of the proletarian state in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism It was called "new" as compared with War Communism, an economic policy followed in Soviet Russia during the period of foreign military intervention and civil war (1918-20) The policy of War Communism, made inevitable by war conditions, was characterised by an extreme centralisation of production and distribution, prohibition of free trading, and the surplus-requisitioning system under which the peasants were required to deliver to the state all their surplus produce

When the foreign military intervention and the Civil War ended NEP was introduced and commodity-money relations came to form the main link between socialist industry and small-peasant economy With the replacement of the surplus-requisitioning system by a tax in kind the peasants were able freely to dispose of their surpluses, sell them on the market and buy there the necessary industrial goods

The New Economic Policy permitted the temporary existence of capitalism within certain limits but

retained the commanding heights of the national economy in the hands of the proletarian state It was designed to facilitate the development of the country's productive forces, the improvement of agriculture and the creation of the necessary economic basis for the transition to socialism p 181

[63] *Pod Znamenem Marksizma* (Under the Banner of Marxism)—a philosophical and socio-economic journal founded with the purpose of propagating materialism and atheism and fighting against the 'graduated flunkeys of clericalism" The journal was published monthly in Moscow from January 1922 to June 1944 (from 1933 to 1935 it appeared once every two months) p 189

[64] See F Engels, *Flüchtlingsliteratur* p 192

[65] *Ekonomist*—a journal published in Petrograd from December 1921 to June 1922 by the Department of Industry and Economy of the Russian Technical Society which consisted of bourgeois engineers and technicians hostile to Soviet power, and former owners of enterprises Lenin described the journal as "the obvious centre of the whiteguards". p 200

[66] This refers to an article by V F Pletnyov, chairman of the Proletcult, "On Ideological Front", printed in *Pravda*, September 27, 1922 p 203

[67] Lenin is referring to the article "'Left-Wing' Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality" (see *Collected Works*, Vol. 27). p 211

[68] *Left Communists*—an opportunist group in the R C P (B) headed by Bukharin, it appeared early in 1918 when the question of concluding the Brest Peace was being discussed in the Party. Under cover of Leftist phrases about revolutionary war, the group of Left Communists advocated the adventurist policy of drawing the Soviet Republic which had as yet no army into a war with imperialist Germany, and thus endangering Soviet power Left Communists likewise opposed the introduction of one-man management and labour

discipline and the employment of bourgeois specialists in Soviet industry The Communist Party led by Lenin gave a decisive rebuff to the policy of Left Communists p 211

[69] The reference is, apparently, made to the description of the Paris Commune as a "supremely flexible political form" in Marx's *The Civil War in France* (see K Marx and F Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol I, Moscow, 1962, pp 473-90) and the high appraisal of the "flexibility of the Parisians" given by Marx in a letter to Ludwig Kugelmann on April 12, 1871 (see K Marx and F Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol II, Moscow, 1962, pp 463-64). p 216

[70] Lenin has in mind the following passage from Marx's letter to Engels dated April 16, 1856 "The whole thing in Germany will depend on the possibility of backing the proletarian revolution by some second edition of the Peasant War Then the affair will be splendid" (see Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, p 92) p 217

[71] *The Workers' and Peasants' Inspection* was organised on Lenin's initiative in February 1920 on the basis of the reorganised People's Commissariat of State Control formed in the early months of Soviet power p 222

[72] The letter of the C C of the R C P "On Proletcult" was published in *Pravda* on December 1, 1920 p 251

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became a leading advocate of feudalism and medieval scholasticism, regarding them as the only salvation from communism In 1922 he was exiled abroad for his counter-revolutionary activities, where he became one of the ideologists of White émigrés —10

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Bobrinsky, Vladimir Alexeyevich (b 1868)—Russian reactionary politician, big landowner and sugar manufacturer Being an extreme nationalist, he advocated forced Russification of the Russian borderlands, after the October Socialist Revolution he came out against Soviet rule while in emigration —49, 50

Bogdanov (Malinovsky), Alexander Alexandrovich (1873-1928)—Russian Social-Democrat, philosopher, sociologist, economist After the Second R S D L P Congress (1903) he joined the Bolsheviks, tried to create his own philosophical system —"empirio-criticism" (a variety of subjective-idealist Machism) —which Lenin sharply criticised in his book *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* In 1919 he was expelled from the Bolshevik Party After the October Socialist Revolution he became one of the organisers and leaders of the Proletcult — 252

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Gredeskul, Nikolai Andreyevich (b 1864)—Russian jurist and publicist, professor, Constitutional-Democrat, deputy to the First Duma Contributed to the Cadet newspaper *Rech* (Speech) and to some other bourgeois-liberal papers In 1916 he withdrew from the Cadet Party After the October Socialist Revolution, he worked as a professor at Leningrad higher education institutions.—32
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H

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Katkov, Mikhail Nikiforovich (1818-1887)—Russian landowner and reactionary publicist His name came to stand for the most rampant reaction —21

Kautsky, Karl (1854-1938)—one of the theoreticians of German Social-Democracy and the Second International, at first a Marxist, he later became a Marxist renegade; he was an ideologist of Centrism (Kautskianism)—a most dangerous and harmful variety of opportunism —102, 111, 175, 221, 238

Kavelin, Konstantin Dmitriyevich (1818-1885)—Russian historian and jurist, professor at the Universities of Moscow (1844-48) and St Petersburg (1857-61), a representative of landowner-bourgeois liberalism, during the preparation of and the implementation of the "peasant" reform in 1861 he opposed the revolutionary-democratic movement and approved of the autocracy's reactionary policy —31

Kerensky, Alexander Fyodorovich (b 1881)—Socialist-Revolutionary After the February bourgeois-democratic revolution in 1917 he

became Minister of Justice, War and Naval Minister, and then Chairman of the bourgeois Provisional Government and Supreme Commander-in-Chief Following the October Socialist Revolution he fought against Soviet power, in 1918 fled abroad —161

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Khodorovsky, I. I. (1885-1940)—member of the Bolshevik Party from 1903 After the October Socialist Revolution he was engaged in Party, military and government work. From 1922 to 1928 he worked as Deputy People's Commissar for Education —208, 210

Kistyakovsky, B A. (1868-1920)—Cadet, publicist; in 1909 he took part in the publication of the collection *Vekhi*.—10

Kolchak, Alexander Vasilyevich (1873-1920)—admiral of the tsarist fleet, monarchist After the October Socialist Revolution he proclaimed himself the Supreme Ruler of Russia and headed the military dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and landowners in the Urals, Siberia and the Far East. In February 1920 his troops were routed by the Red Army —83, 87, 88, 89, 91, 92, 146, 161

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Krestovnikov, Grigory Alexandrovich (b 1855)—big Russian industrialist and stock broker; member of the counter-revolutionary Octobrist Party of the bourgeoisie and landowners —47

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Kutler, Nikolai Nikolayevich (1859-1924)—prominent member of the Cadet Party, Minister of Agriculture and Land Settlement (1905-06); member of the Second and the Third Duma, one of the authors of the Cadet draft agrarian programme —47

L

Lassalle, Ferdinand (1825-1864)—German socialist, founder of the General Association of German Workers On some major political questions he adopted an opportunist stand, for which he was sharply criticised by Marx and Engels —50, 248

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Liebknecht, Karl (1871-1919)—outstanding figure in the German and international working-class movement During the November revolution in Germany in 1918 he headed, together with Rosa Luxemburg, the revolutionary vanguard of the German workers He was one of the founders of the Communist Party of Germany and organisers of the revolt of the Berlin workers in January 1919. After its suppression he was brutally murdered by the counter-revolutionaries —69

Liebman, F. (Gersh, Peisakh) (b 1882)—one of the Bund leaders who later joined the liquidators During World War I (1914-18) he supported the tsar's policy of annexation —43

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Longuet, Jean (1876-1938)—one of the leaders of the French Socialist Party and the Second International, publicist. During World War I he headed the Centrist-pacifist minority of the F S P In 1921 he became a member of the Executive Committee of the Vienna (Two-and-a-Half) International From 1923 onwards he was one of the leaders of the so-called Socialist Labour International —175

Lunacharsky, Anatoly Vasilyevich (1875-1933)—Soviet statesman and professional revolutionary, publicist, playwright, and the author of several works on art and literature. After the October Socialist Revolution and up to 1929 he worked as People's Commissar of Public Education, then as Chairman of the Academic Council under the Central Executive Committee of the U S S R From 1930 on, academician —81, 152, 154, 245, 246, 247, 265

Luxemburg, Rosa (1871-1919)—outstanding figure in the German and Polish working-class movement and the Second International, one of the founders of the Communist Party of Germany In January 1919 she was arrested and murdered by order of the Scheidemann government — 69

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MacDonald, James Ramsay (1866-1937)—British politician, one of the founders and leaders of the Independent Labour Party and of the Labour Party His policy was extremely opportunistic; he preached the theory of class collaboration and of the gradual transition of capitalism to socialism —175

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Martov, L (Tsederbaum, Yuli Osipovich) (1873-1923)—Russian Social-Democrat, one of the Menshevik leaders — 102, 175

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111, 132, 133, 194, 198, 216, 219, 240, 242, 246, 247, 248, 256, 265

Maslov, Pyotr Pavlovich (1867-1946)—Russian Social-Democrat, Menshevik. Author of several revisionist works on the agrarian question. In the years of World War I he took up a social-chauvinist stand. After the October Socialist Revolution he worked as a professor of political economy—47

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Menshikov, Mikhail Osipovich (1859-1919)—reactionary Russian publicist, contributor to *Novoye Vremya* (New Times), a Black-Hundred newspaper—19, 47

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Pobedonostsev, Konstantin Petrovich (1827-1907) — reactionary statesman in tsarist Russia, the virtual head of the government and chief spokesman of feudal reaction under Alexander III, who played an important role under Nicholas II as well, he waged a stubborn struggle against the revolutionary movement. In October 1905 he had to resign and abandoned politics —16, 21

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Smirnov, Y. (Gurevich, Emmanuel Lvovich) (b 1865)—Russian Social-Democrat, Menshevik In the years of reaction (1907-10) and of the new revolutionary upsurge, he was a liquidator, one of the founders and contributors to *Nasha Zhizn* (Our Life)—a Menshevik-liquidator journal During World War I, he took up a social-chauvinist stand—47

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Sorokin, Pitirim Alexandrovich (b 1889)—Socialist - Revolutionary. Assistant Professor at Petrograd University (until 1917) From 1919 to 1922 he taught sociology in higher educational establishments in Petrograd He was later exiled abroad for his counter-revolutionary activities—200, 201

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Sukhanov, N (Timmer, Nikolai Nikolayevich) (b 1882)—Russian economist and publicist, Menshevik After the October Socialist Revolution he worked in Soviet economic bodies In 1931 he was convicted as the leader of an underground Menshevik organisation—216, 219

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